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ESSAYS

MORAL AND LITERARY.

ESSAYS

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MORAL AND LITERARY,

BY

VICESIMUS KNOX, M. A.

A NEW EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

STUDIA ET MORES.
VIRG.

OTII OBLECTATIONEM HANC HONESTISSIMAM JUDICO.
CIC.

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PREFACE.

AS the preſent differs greatly from the preceding editions, it may be neceſſary to give ſome account of the alteration: and I hope the reader will indulge what may be called the Parental Fondneſs of an Author, while he briefly relates the hiſtory of his work.

MANY of the papers in the Firſt Edition of the Firſt Volume were written at College as voluntary exerciſes, for the ſake of improvement. They had all of them an undoubted right to the epithet of juvenile. Some were compoſed before the Writer had left his ſchool, and moſt of them before he had taken his Bachelor's degree. When they had accumulated to a number ſufficient to make a volume, he debated a moment, whether he ſhould commit them to the flames, or ſend them up as an adventure, without a name, to a London Publiſher. Perhaps it was vanity, perhaps it was raſhneſs, and perhaps a laudable motive, which determined him to tranſmit them as a gratuitous preſent to a Publiſher. They were ſent anonymouſly from Oxford to London, were publiſhed anonymouſly, nor did the Publiſher know

 either

either the Writer's name or perſon during ſeveral months ſubſequent to the publication. Praiſe was, however, beſtowed upon them from various and reſpectable quarters; and praiſe, operating like the warm ſunſhine on the ice, gradually relaxed his reſolutions of concealment. It was not, however, without many fears and unaffected diffidence, that he conſented to own a child of the brain which he had intended to expoſe and relinquiſh for ever, and that he at laſt prefixed his name to the Second Edition. He was tempted alſo to add a Second Volume; and is happy in the reflection, that he has yet had no cauſe to repent of his compliance with the natural allurements of applauſe, and the kind importunity of friends and relations. The good intentions which the book evidently diſplayed, tended to ſecure it from cenſure, and were perhaps the chief and beſt cauſes of its commendation.

The book has now been out of print, as the mercantile phraſe expreſſes it, a conſiderable time. Its writer has been informed, that it has frequently been demanded, and that many have been partial enough to expreſs diſappointment at not being able to procure it. He was, however, unwilling to accelerate the edition, ſo as to exclude ſuch additions and improvements as he has been able to inſert, in the midſt of a conſtant ſucceſſion of other cares and labours. His reſpect and gratitude to his candid Readers, has induced him to take the opportunity of New Editions, to render whatever little preſents he has ventured to make them, leſs unworthy of acceptance.

A LARGE

PREFACE.

A LARGE number of new Papers is admitted in this Edition, and a few of the former excluded, to make room. As the arrangements of detached Papers is ſeldom of importance, it has been wholly changed, not indeed with the formality of a methodical plan, but fortuitouſly, and indeed juſt as the Papers happened to be reviſed and prepared.

HE who reſides at a diſtance from the metropolis and the preſs, will uſually find it neceſſary to requeſt the Reader to exerciſe his candour, as well as his ſagacity, in the correction of typographical Errata. Notwithſtanding great care has been taken, it is but too probable that many errors remain, both of this and of other kinds, which an attentive Reader will indeed obſerve, but a courteous Reader excuſe.

IN the great variety of matter which theſe Volumes contain, it is almoſt impoſſible but that ſome opinion ſhould be advanced, which many will be diſpoſed to controvert. Men who are actuated by different hopes and fears, and whoſe minds have been tinctured by different principles in religion or politics, by different ſtudies, examples, and education, will often behold manners, books, and things, through ſuch deluſive media as repreſent the ſame object in every diverſity of colour. But though the book may not be exempt from erroneous or diſputable aſſertions, the Writer diſmiſſes it with a full confidence, that the general tendency of it is to form *honeſt men*, to promote the love of truth and liberty, and to recommend whatever is uſeful and amiable.

TUNBRIDGE,
June 1, 1782.

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ESSAYS,

MORAL, &c.

No. I. ON ESSAY WRITING.

THOSE Sages of antiquity, who, from their improvements in knowledge and virtue, had the leaſt dubious claim to the appellation of wiſe men, were yet too modeſt to aſſume a name which had the appearance of oſtentation, and rather choſe to be called Philoſophers, or Lovers of Wiſdom. From ſimilar motives, many of the Moderns, who have written with great ſkill on ſubjects of morality and ſcience, have entitled their productions, Eſſays; a name, which, though it may now convey the idea of regular treatiſes and diſſertations, is ſynonymous with the word Attempts, and means no more than humble endeavours to inſtruct or to amuſe. A writer who, at a late period, purſuing the track of thoſe celebrated authors who preceded him, boldly promiſes improvement on his predeceſſors, is received with that indignation which arrogance, even when ſupported by ſome degree of merit, naturally excites; but he who profeſſes only an attempt, however unſucceſsful, has a claim to candour and indulgence. Failure has ceaſed to be ridiculous, where preſumption has not made pretenſions, nor confidence anticipated ſucceſs.

Many works therefore, diſtinguiſhed by this unaſſuming title, have been well received, and have ob-

tained a very exalted place in the ſcale of literary honours. None have become more popular in their own country, than thoſe periodical papers, which were publiſhed by the Tatler, the Guardian, and the Spectator, and which have been ſucceſſively imitated by later writers. The taſte and morals of the nation have been more generally improved by thoſe excellent, though ſhort and detached compoſitions, than by long, regular, elaborate ſyſtems. They were addreſſed to the heart and imagination, and fitted for the haunts of men engaged in the employments of common life; while ſcientific treatiſes of ethics were calculated only for the exerciſe of ſcholaſtic diſputation; and their influence on the conduct of life, if they ever poſſeſſed any, was circumſcribed within narrow limits. Addiſon, like Socrates, to whom he has often been compared, brought down knowledge from thoſe heights which were acceſſible only to profeſſed ſcholars, and placed it within the reach of all, who, to natural and common ſenſe, added the advantage of a common education. He it was who ſtripped philoſophy of that unbecoming garb in which ſhe had been diſguiſed by her miſtaken followers, and repreſented her attired by the Graces, like the Goddeſs of Beauty.

The votaries of the ſeverer muſes have ſometimes ventured to deſpiſe this entertaining ſpecies of productions, as futile and ſuperficial. They have aſſerted that Truth needs not embelliſhment, and that the ornaments which ſhe borrows from imagination are no leſs unbecoming than unneceſſary. But the real utility of literary labours is to be eſtimated by the extent of their influence on the national manners and underſtanding. Truth, however, when delivered with that ſyſtematic preciſion which is approved in the ſchools of philoſophy, will not have charms enough to detain the common reader who takes up a book for the amuſement of a leiſure hour, and who muſt be tempted to admit inſtruction, by the proſpect of receiving pleaſure. In every thouſand of thoſe who have been delighted with the papers of Addiſon, perhaps not more than one has ſeen the Principia of Newton. Praiſes adequate to the merits of ſo exalted a genius, as was his who diſcovered the

the true syſtem of the univerſe, can ſcarcely be beſtowed; nor is it detraction from his fame to aſſert, that ſince his theories require a painful attention to comprehend them, they will not generally be attended to, in a commercial country like our own, where only the ſhort interval which the purſuit of gain, and the practice of mechanic arts affords, will be devoted to letters by the more numerous claſſes of the community. And indeed it muſt be confeſſed, that though the abſtruſer doctrines of philoſophy may be highly intereſting to the man of ſcience, and may qualify him for a profeſſor's chair, or a ſeat at the board of longitude, yet they ſeem not to have any tendency to render him better in his civil and ſocial relations. I never could find that the Elements of Euclid taught any one to be a better father, huſband, ſon, or citizen. Mathematical truth is indeed a moſt beautiful object of contemplation; but moral truth is better calculated to excite and reward the attention of the buſy world.

The great Bacon, who pointed out the path to thoſe ſublime heights in philoſophy, at which his followers have arrived, would never have brought his ſpeculations home to men's buſineſs and boſoms, to uſe his own expreſſions, if he had not written his Eſſays; a work, which, as it was of the moſt extenſive conſequence, and moſt eaſily underſtood, was the moſt popular of all his productions in his own country. The remarks contained in it are ſuch as ſhew that he had an intimate knowledge of the human heart, and they have a tendency to direct mankind in the right conduct of life. They are the inſtitutes of a ſcience which all wiſh to learn; but how few, in compariſon, are intereſted in the *Novum Organum?* Whether a man adopt the hypothetical or experimental philoſophy, is a matter of indifference to his moral conduct; nor is a Carteſian neceſſarily better or worſe than the admirer of the more modern and more probable ſyſtem. An error in phyſics is ſeldom productive of conſequences injurious to one's neighbour or one's ſelf.

Bacon diſcovered new tracts of learning; he gave directions to purſue them; he baniſhed hypotheſis, and introduced experiment; he is deſervedly the glory of

our nation, as the reſtorer of true philoſophy; but yet, without detracting from his merits, we may expreſs our regret that he did not beſtow more time and pains on the grand ſcience of human nature. He appears, from the ſpecimens he has left us, to have been better qualified to advance it to perfection than any modern. The example, however, of ſo profound a writer, is ſufficient to vindicate from the charge of futility, thoſe little compoſitions, which, without the formality of ſtudied treatiſes, aim at inſtructing the reader in the truths of ethics, of criticiſm, and in all the more agreeable ſubjects of philoſophy.

In an age when books and a competent education are eaſily attainable, all ranks will be found to devote a conſiderable portion of their unemployed time to ſome kind of reading. But what ſhall they read during the interval of half an hour, interrupted perhaps by the prattle of children, or the impertinence of viſitors, or the calls of buſineſs? not a long and tedious treatiſe, divided and ſubdivided, and requiring at leaſt the unſuſpended attention of half a day, fully to comprehend the whole. They ſeek relaxation, but in this they find a taſk; irkſome, becauſe it requires cloſe application; and unimproving, becauſe that application can only be deſultory. But hard indeed muſt be his lot, who, in the moſt active and moſt diſſipated ſcenes of life, cannot beſtow the ſmall ſpace of time required in the peruſal of an Eſſay of a few pages. He who poſſeſſes ſuch books as the Religion of Nature Delineated, will not eaſily find better guides, but yet he will oftener be tempted to take the Spectator from his ſhelves. He who has never thought of reading the tedious, though inſtructive, conferences of Arrian, has perhaps committed to memory the Enchiridion of Epictetus. Even the form, the ſize, the weight of the volume, are circumſtances which deſerve to be attended to in a ſubordinate degree, ſince they may contribute to render its influence more diffuſive. Who could bear to carry a folio with him in his chariot, or recline on a ſopha with a heavy quarto in his hand?

It muſt not, however, be ſuppoſed, that this kind of works is adapted only to the ſuperficial reader. Many

ſubjects

subjects of morality and learning have been concisely discussed in a few pages, with a depth, solidity, and originality of thought, rarely exceeded in any formal dissertation. The works of our English divines, the best moralists in the world, have sometimes lost their effect by their prolixity: for the mind of man, though comprehensive to a very great degree, is yet circumscribed within certain bounds, and, like a full vessel, suffers all that is superfluous to run to waste. But the periodical Essay satisfies the subject, without fatiguing the attention, or overburthening the memory.

The detached nature of these writings enables the writer to vary his style without impropriety; to be grave or gay, humorous or severe; to lay down positive rules, or to teach by example; to speak in his own person, or to introduce an instructive tale. Every volume contains a variety of subjects treated in various manners, and suited to the dispositions of different readers, or of the same reader at different times. Thus is idleness rendered attentive, and the listless moments of leisure are filled up with the advantages of study, unmixed with the toil of formal application. The saunterer is deceived into employment, and the vicious, the dissipated, the busy, are, as it were, in spite of themselves, engaged in literary and philosophical contemplation.

Thus extensively useful and entertaining, no wonder Essays have been more universally read in the busy walks of life than any other productions. The names and works of Montaigne, of Bacon, of Temple, of Collier, of Addison, of Steele, and of their successful followers, are held in a degree of esteem, which neither the lapse of time nor the caprice of fashion has been able to annihilate.

There is scarcely an individual, not only of those who profess learning, but of those who devote any of their time to reading, who has not perused the Spectators. Placed, however, in our hands in the earliest period of life, they have lost, in the eyes of many readers, the charm of novelty. To these perhaps new Attempts or Essays, similar at least in kind, may afford entertainment. Nor should they be checked as presumptuous

ſumptuous, ſince, without the ſpirit of adventure, modern literature would become ſtationary or retrograde. The fame of thoſe writers, however great, is but adequate to their merits; but though it is true that they have preſented us with much fine gold, yet the mine is ſtill rich, and will never be exhauſted.

From the various combination of human paſſions, originally few in number, an infinite variety of moral appearances is found to ariſe. Political revolutions, religious reformations, the whims of faſhion, and the changes in literature, enable the moral writer, when he travels even in the beaten road of an Eſſayiſt, to diſcover proſpects hitherto unobſerved or not deſcribed.

The metropolis of a great empire flouriſhing in arts and commerce, is, as it were, the hot-bed of manners, in which every plant ſhoots up with forced luxuriance. In a harveſt ſo plentiful, not only thoſe who firſt apply the ſickle are rewarded with abundance, but many a loaded ſheaf remains to be picked up by the careful gleaner. And happily for the morals and amuſement, as well as underſtandings of our nation, the labourers have not been few nor unſucceſsful.

The preſent age has been called an age of literary luxury; nor let it bluſh at the appellation. The paſſion for letters is attended with the ſweeteſt ſatisfactions; and the indulgence of it tends to ſilence the importunity of other paſſions, which can ſeldom be gratified without conſequent miſery.

No. II. ON ENTRANCE INTO LIFE, AND THE CONDUCT OF EARLY MANHOOD.

THERE ſeems to be a peculiar propriety in addreſſing moral precepts to the riſing generation. Beſides that, like travellers entering on a journey, they want direction, there are circumſtances which render it probable,

probable, that inſtruction will be more efficacious in youth than at a maturer period. Long habits of buſineſs or pleaſure, and an indiſcriminate intercourſe with mankind, often ſuperinduce a great degree of inſenſibility; and the battered veteran at laſt conſiders the admonitions of the moraliſt as the vain babbling of a ſophiſt, and the declamation of a ſchool-boy. The keen edge of moral perception is blunted by long and reiterated colliſion. To him who has loſt the finer ſenſibilities, it is no leſs fruitleſs to addreſs a moral diſcourſe, than to repreſent to the deaf the charms of melody, or to the blind, the beauties of a picture.

But youth poſſeſſes ſenſibility in perfection; and unleſs education has been totally neglected, or erroneouſly purſued, its habits are uſually virtuous. Furniſhed with a natural ſuſceptibility, and free from any acquired impediment, the mind is then in the moſt favourable ſtate for the admiſſion of inſtruction, and for learning how to live.

I will then ſuppoſe a young man preſent who has paſſed through the forms of a liberal education at ſchool, and who is juſt entering on the ſtage of life, to act his part according to his own judgment. I will addreſs him with all the affection and ſincerity of a parent, in the following manner:

"You have violent paſſions implanted in you by "Nature for the accompliſhment of her purpoſes. "But do not conclude, as many have done to their "ruin, that becauſe they are violent, they are irre- "ſiſtible. The ſame Nature which gave you paſſions, "gave you reaſon and a love of order. Religion, "added to the light of Nature and the experience of "mankind, has concurred in eſtabliſhing it as an un- "queſtionable truth, that the irregular or intemperate "indulgence of the paſſions is always attended with "pain in ſome mode or other, which greatly exceeds "its pleaſure.

"Your paſſions will be eaſily reſtrained from enor- "mous exceſs, if you really wiſh and honeſtly endea- "vour to reſtrain them. But the greater part of young "men ſtudy to inflame their fury, and give them a "degree of force which they poſſeſs not in a ſtate of na- "ture.

" ture. They run into temptation, and desire not to
" be delivered from evil. They knowingly and wil-
" lingly sacrifice to momentary gratifications, the com-
" fort of all which should sweeten the remainder of life.
" Begin then with most sincerely wishing to conquer
" those subtle and powerful enemies which you carry
" in your bosom. Pray for divine assistance. Avoid
" solitude the first moment a loose thought insinuates
" itself, and hasten to the company of those whom you
" respect. Never converse on subjects which lead to
" impure ideas. Have courage to decline reading
" immoral books, even when they fall into your hands.
" If you form a strong attachment to a virtuous woman,
" dare to marry early. It is better to be poor than
" wicked. Cherish the object of your early love. Be
" industrious, and trust in Providence.

" Thus shall you avoid the perpetual torments of
" unruly affection, the most loathsome of diseases, and
" the thousand penalties of selfish celibacy. Thus
" shall you please God and your own heart, if it is a
" good one; and displease none but an ill-judging and
" wicked world, and perhaps a few of your covetous
" relations.

" But really you have not so much to fear from the
" violence of the concupiscible affections, when unas-
" sisted by voluntary compliance, as from vanity.
" The perverse ambition of arriving at the character of
" a man of spirit by vicious audacity, has of late uni-
" versally prevailed, and has ruined the greater part
" of the British youth. I have known many young
" men proud of the impurest of distempers, and boast-
" ing of misfortunes which are attended with the
" greatest pain and misery, and ought to be accom-
" panied with shame. Far more have taken pains to
" shine, amidst the little circle of their vicious ac-
" quaintance, in the character of gay libertines, than
" to acquire, by useful qualities, the esteem of the
" good. From vanity, are health and peace sacrificed,
" fortunes lavished without credit or enjoyment, every
" relative and personal duty neglected, and religion
" boldly set at defiance. To be admitted into the
" company of those who disgrace the family title which

" they

" they inherit, thouſands plunge into debauchery with-
" out paſſion, into drunkenneſs without convivial en-
" joyment, into gaming without the means or incli-
" nation for play. Old age rapidly advances. When
" vanity at length retreats from inſult and from mor-
" tification, avarice ſucceeds; and meanneſs, and diſ-
" eaſe, and diſgrace, and poverty, and diſcontent, and
" deſpair, diffuſe clouds and darkneſs over the evening
" of life. Such is the lot of thoſe who glory in their
" ſhame, and are aſhamed of their glory.

" Have ſenſe and reſolution enough, therefore, to
" give up all pretenſions to thoſe titles of a fine fellow,
" a rake, or whatever vulgar name the temporary cant
" of the vicious beſtows on the diſtinguiſhed libertine.
" Preſerve your principles, and be ſteady in your con-
" duct. And though your exemplary behaviour may
" bring upon you the inſulting and ironical appellation
" of a Saint, a Puritan, or even a Methodiſt, *perſevere.*
" It will be your turn in a few years, not indeed to
" inſult, but to pity. Have ſpirit. Shew your ſpirit.
" But let it be that ſpirit which urges you to proceed
" againſt all oppoſition in the path in which you were
" placed by the faithful guide of your infancy and
" early youth. Diſplay a noble ſuperiority in daring to
" diſregard the ſpiteful and artful reproaches of the
" vain, who labour to make you a convert to folly, in
" order to keep them in countenance. They will
" laugh at firſt, but eſteem you in their hearts, even
" while they laugh, and, in the end, revere your
" virtue.

" Let that generous courage which conſcious rectí-
" tude inſpires, enable you to deſpiſe and neglect the
" aſſaults of ridicule. When all other modes of at-
" tack have failed, ridicule has ſucceeded. The bul-
" wark of virtue, which has ſtood firmly againſt the
" weapons of argument, has tottered on its baſis, or
" fallen to the ground, at the ſlighteſt touch of magic
" ridicule. In the college, in the army, in the world
" at large, it is the powerful engine which is uſed to
" level an exalted character. You will infallibly be
" attacked with it, if you are in any reſpects ſingular;

" and ſingular in many reſpects you muſt be, if you are " eminently virtuous.

" Love truth, and dare to ſpeak it at all events. " The man of the world will tell you, you muſt diſ- " ſemble; and ſo you muſt, if your objects and pur- " ſuits are as mean and as ſelfiſh as his. But your " purpoſes are generous; and your means of obtaining " them are therefore undiſguiſed. You mean well. " Avow your meaning, if honour requires the avowal, " and fear nothing. You will indeed do right to wiſh " to pleaſe; but you will only wiſh to pleaſe the worthy; " and none but worthy actions will effect that purpoſe. " With reſpect to that *art of pleaſing* which requires the " ſacrifice of your ſincerity, deſpiſe it as the baſe qua- " lity of flatterers, ſycophants, cheats, and ſcoundrels. " An habitual liar, beſides that he will be known and " marked with infamy, muſt poſſeſs a poor and puſil- " lanimous heart; for lying originates in cowardice. " It originates alſo in fraud; and a liar, whatever may " be his ſtation, would certainly, if he were ſure of " ſecrecy, be a thief. Sorry am I to ſay, that this " habit is very frequent in the world; even among " thoſe who make a figure in the realms of diſſipation; " among thoſe, whoſe *honour* would compel them to " ſtab you to the heart, if you were to tell them plainly " ſo mortifying a truth, that you convict them of a " lie.

" With all your good qualities, unite the humility " of a Chriſtian. Be not moroſe. Be cautious of over- " valuing yourſelf. Make allowances for the vices and " errors which you will daily ſee. Remember that all " have not had the benefit of moral inſtruction; that a " great part of mankind are in effect orphans turned " looſe into the wide world, without one faithful friend " to give them advice; left to find their own way in a " dark and rugged wilderneſs, with ſnares, and quick- " ſands, and chaſms, around them. Be candid there- " fore, and, among all the improvements of education " and refinements of manners, let the beautiful Chriſ- " tian graces of Meekneſs and Benevolence ſhine moſt " conſpicuous. Wherever you can, relieve diſtreſs,

" prevent

" prevent miſchief, and do good; but be neither often-
" tatious, nor cenſorious.

" Be cheerful, and gratefully enjoy the good which
" Providence has beſtowed upon you. But be mode-
" rate. Moderation is the law of enjoyment. All
" beyond is nominal pleaſure and real pain.

" I will not multiply my precepts. Chuſe good
" books, and follow their direction. Adopt religious,
" virtuous, manly principles. Fix them deeply in your
" boſom, and let them go with you unlooſened and un-
" altered to the grave.

" If you follow ſuch advice as, from the pure motive
" of ſerving you moſt eſſentially, I have given you, I
" will not indeed promiſe that you ſhall not be unfor-
" tunate, according to the common idea of the word;
" but I will confidently aſſure you, that you ſhall not
" be unhappy. I will not promiſe you worldly ſuc-
" ceſs, but I will engage that you ſhall deſerve it, and
" ſhall know how to bear the want of it."

No. III. CLASSICAL LEARNING VINDICATED.

A FEW men of wit, who, in a long intercourſe with the faſhionable world, had probably forgotten that little knowledge of the ancient languages and authors which they had acquired at ſchool, have endeavoured to bring into diſcredit the prevailing mode of education, which devotes ſo much time to the ſtudy of Grecian and Roman literature. Poſſeſſed of natural parts, they have, perhaps, beſides, enjoyed all thoſe advantages of good company and extenſive commerce with the living world, which both excite, and give occaſion to diſplay, great abilities. They became, therefore, diſtinguiſhed characters in their time, though their ſolid attainments were few, and greatly defective. But, whatever figure they made, they would have ſhone with ſtill greater luſtre, if they had retained a tincture of that elegance and liberality of ſentiment which the mind acquires by a ſtudy of the claſſics, and which contributes

tributes more to form the true Gentleman, than the ſubſtituted ornaments of modern affectation.

The example of theſe illuſtrious, but ſuperficial perſonages, has induced every prater, who has been taught to liſp broken French, and dance a minuet, to laugh at the lubberly boy, as he calls him, who ſpends a dozen years at ſchool, in learning Greek and Latin. He unfairly repreſents this time, as ſpent ſolely in acquiring the languages; ignorant that a taſte is often formed in it for thoſe authors, which may furniſh the pureſt and the moſt elegant pleaſures during the remainder of life.

The pert vivacity of aſſured ignorance has often perſuaded the fond mother to diſcard the tutor for the dancing-maſter; to be more ſolicitous that the hopes of the family, the heir, perhaps, to a title, an eſtate, and even a ſhare of legiſlation, ſhould be taught to hold up his head, than be furniſhed with theſe ideas and principles, which would render him truly happy in himſelf, and an honour and advantage to his friends and to his country.

Even among thoſe who are fully ſenſible of the neceſſity of improving the beauties of the mind, as well as the graces of the perſon, there prevails a predilection for modern languages and modern literature to the excluſion of the ancient. In the idea of theſe, a ſufficient ſtock of hiſtorical knowledge is to be gained by an attention to the events of the two or three laſt centuries, and a ſufficient acquaintance with philoſophy and polite learning, from a peruſal of the writers of France and Italy. Collections of letters and ſtate-papers, and the epigrammatic narratives of the Hiſtorian of Ferney, are to ſupply the place of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Livy. Arioſto, Taſſo, and Boileau, are to be read in preference to Homer, Virgil, and Horace; and the works of Voltaire alone to be ſubſtituted in the place of all the poetry, all the philoſophy, and all the hiſtory that has ever been written. In conſequence of theſe miſtaken notions, our great grammar-ſchools, which have produced ſo many ornaments of human nature, are exploded by many, as the ſeats of illiberal manners and of antiquated learning.

In

In anſwer to the charge, that illiberal manners are the diſgraceful characteriſtic of boys educated in grammar-ſchools, I muſt confeſs I am pleaſed with the natural ſimplicity of that age of ſprightlineſs and inexperience; nor do I know a ſight more truly ridiculous, than that of a boy of fourteen affecting the Graces, and behaving among his ſuperiors in age and attainments, with all the diſguſting eaſe of ſelf-ſufficiency. The ſame natural good ſenſe which makes the boy act in character, will teach the man a manly behaviour. And I believe every judicious perſon had rather ſee his ſon, while very young, partaking in the noiſy mirth of his ſchool-fellows, than bowing and grinning in the inſipid circle of a card-party.

With reſpect to the other charge, that a learned education is a little out of faſhion in ſome polite circles, we confeſs and lament that it is true. But though we allow faſhion to dictate without controul the exact dimenſions of a buckle or a head-dreſs; yet a regard for the honour and happineſs of human nature induces us to diſpute her ſovereign authority in thoſe things on which depend the manners and ſentiments of a riſing generation.

If, however, it is granted, that the true gentleman, that is, the man of enlarged notions and poliſhed taſte, cannot, by any method of education, be ſo well formed, as by the claſſical; yet it by no means follows, that thoſe whoſe happineſs muſt, in a great meaſure, depend on leſs comprehenſive views of men and things, ſhould be inſtructed in the ſame mode. The time that is uſually ſpent in Lilly's Grammar, and in acquiring juſt ſo much knowledge of the Latin language as may inſpire a young man with vanity, but which cannot enable him to enter into the ſpirit of an author, is certainly ill beſtowed. He who is deſigned for a vulgar walk of life had much better be reading Wingate's Arithmetic than Cordery's Colloquies, and learning the Rule of Three than the Syntax.

The miſtakes of well-meaning ignorance are to be pitied and excuſed. But how ſhall we apologize for thoſe who move in a higher ſphere, and who cannot but know, that the greateſt men our nation has produced, whether

whether greatneſs is eſtimated by power, wealth, title, knowledge, or virtue, have laid the foundation of their eminence in our grammar-ſchools, where little elſe was taught but claſſical learning? how ſhall we apologize for theſe, when they ſlight a mode of education which the experience of ages has proved to be efficacious, and adopt a new one, which, from its ſuperficial nature, cannot form the man of dignity, or of juſt taſte? Would a More, for inſtance, a Sidney, a Raleigh, a Milton, a Temple, and many others, have attained to that perfection of character, at which they aſpired and arrived, if they had been educated in the ſuperficial modes?

Some leading authors ſeem to have wiſhed that all our literary inquiries ſhould be limited to that period which they are pleaſed to diſtinguiſh by calling it the age of Lewis XIV. It is indeed a ſhining interval in the revolutions of time; but moſt of the great characters that appeared in it, were formed on the models of a better age, the age of Auguſtus, or of Pericles. And I know not, whether the glorious reign of our own Elizabeth might not exhibit examples of probity and learning, valour and patriotiſm, fitter for the imitation of an Engliſhman, than thoſe of any epoch in the annals of our rival nation.

While, however, we reprobate the idea of confining attention to the writings and tranſactions of the laſt three hundred years, it muſt be confeſſed that this period deſerves regard. The inventions of the compaſs, of printing, of gunpowder, and a conſequent ſpirit of enterprize, have rendered modern times peculiarly intereſting. During this period, the French nation, to uſe their own idea, have been remarkably awakened; nor will any man of letters, with juſt pretenſions to taſte, reſt ſatisfied, without reading the works of Fenelon, of Boileau, and of many others who have written in the true ſpirit of the ancients. He will, after all, acknowledge, that they are but imitations of thoſe originals, which are no leſs open to us than they were to them; and will confeſs it to be a want of ſpirit, to drink at the diſtant ſtream, when we have acceſs to the fountain. If we can be contented with Imitations, we have excellent ones in the works of Pope and Addiſon.

But

But what ſculptor would be ſatisfied with examining the plaſter buſt, who was at liberty to walk in the Florentine gallery?

There is certainly ſomething in the character of an Engliſhman analogous to the diſpoſition of an old Roman. He has a natural generoſity, and love of independence. He has alſo a gravity of temper, better adapted to mental and moral improvement, than any other; becauſe more capable of fixed attention. French vivacity is foreign to his nature; faſhion, indeed, makes him ſometimes adopt it, but it ſits awkwardly on him, leſſens his inward conſciouſneſs of dignity, and lowers him no leſs in the eſtimation of others. The ideas of a Roman are congenial to him. His mind, when cultivated by a claſſical education, ſhoots up to maturity with the vigour of an indigenous plant, but thrives ſlowly, like the exotic, when nurtured only by the ſlender ſupplies of foreign and ſuperficial inſtruction.

The poliſh of external grace may indeed be deferred till the approach of manhood. When ſolidity is obtained by purſuing the modes preſcribed by our forefathers, then may the file be uſed. The firm ſubſtance will bear attrition, and the luſtre then acquired will be durable. A ſenſible father, who is not himſelf a convert to the effeminacy of the times, had rather ſee a ſon forming himſelf as a ſcholar and a man, on the example of an old Roman or Athenian, than imitating, in his writings and actions, the undignified vivacity of nations which have been taught by their philoſophy to degrade human nature.

Surely, no one will deny that the two principal objects in a well-conducted education, are to cultivate a good heart, and to give the underſtanding ſuch additional ſtrength and information as may ſafely direct the heart in the various events of life, and teach the poſſeſſor of it to act up to the comparative dignity of human nature. But attainments merely ornamental have little tendency to accompliſh either of theſe purpoſes. On the contrary, as they add a luſtre without ſolidity, they induce idleneſs to content itſelf with the appearances of merit, which are eaſily aſſumed, and to neglect the reality, as attainable only by a painful and unoſtentatious

tatious application. They inſpire confidence without worth to ſupport it; they give an air of inſolent ſuperiority which often defeats even the purpoſe of pleaſing; and however they may cauſe admiration in the diſſipated and ſuperficial, they are little eſteemed by thoſe whoſe applauſe is valuable, men of approved virtue and diſpaſſionate reflection. They are then only uſeful and truly graceful when they tend to render good characters more conſpicuouſly amiable.

No. IV. ON THE WISDOM OF AIMING AT PERFECTION.

THE infirmity of human nature is a topic on which the profligate love to enlarge. They are apt to deduce an argument from it no leſs injurious than fallacious. They infer from the conceſſion that man is naturally weak and corrupt, that the precepts of ſtrict morality are utterly uſeleſs, and originate in one of the main proofs of human imbecility, an ill-grounded pride.

Man is indeed a weak creature; but he is alſo an improveable creature. He has ſtrong paſſions; but he has alſo ſtrong powers within him to counteract their operation. He poſſeſſes reaſon; and his happineſs certainly depends upon the voluntary uſe or abuſe, the neglect or the exertion, of this faculty.

It ſeems probable, that they who urge the inefficacy of philoſophical and moral precepts, are only endeavouring to excuſe their own indolence. They who feel themſelves little inclined to correct their miſconduct, are very ſolicitous to perſuade themſelves that they are unable.

Indeed, wherever human creatures are found, there alſo are to be found vice and miſery. Nor is this appearance only among the rude and the illiterate, but among thoſe who are adorned with all the arts of human knowledge. Obſervation affords many examples of thoſe,

thoſe, who, after having recommended virtue in the moſt forcible manner with all the appearance of ſincerity, have at laſt fallen into the diſgrace and wretchedneſs of ſingular profligacy. Contrary to their conviction, their intereſt, their character, to all that ſeemed eſtimable in their own eyes, they have deſcended from the towering heights of virtue into the abyſſes of vice.

Such inſtances do indeed often occur, and they are uſually blazoned and exaggerated by triumphant delinquency. In many caſes of degeneracy, it is probable that the appearances of virtue were inſincere. But allowing, what indeed the uniform deciſions of obſervation, reaſon, and religion, clearly declare, that human nature is weak in the extreme; yet I would draw a different concluſion from that which is deduced by the patrons of libertiniſm.

The nature of man is extremely infirm; therefore I argue, let every effort be made to acquire ſtrength. It cannot be ſaid that the endeavour muſt of neceſſity be abortive; it cannot be ſaid that we have not natural incitements ſufficient to encourage a vigorous attempt. We have nice ſenſibilities of moral rectitude, we have a natural love of excellence, we have intellectual powers capable of infinite improvement, we have precepts innumerable, and, to the honour of human nature, let it be added, that examples alſo greatly abound.

Many individuals, who inrolled themſelves among the ſeverer ſects of ancient philoſophy, have exhibited moſt animating proofs of the ſtrength of human nature. It is not to be ſuppoſed that they poſſeſſed faculties more in number, or more perfect in their kind, than the preſent race. But they loved excellence, and they believed that they were capable of it. That belief operated moſt favourably on their exertion. They ſucceeded in their attempts, and ſtand forth among mankind like coloſſal ſtatues amid a collection of images leſs than the life.

I hope therefore it will be rendering an effectual ſervice to mankind, if I can revive this belief among the gay and the diſſipated. Philoſophers have already received it; but philoſophers are to the reſt of mankind

what

what a drop of water is to an ocean. The pretended philosophers are numerous indeed; but they commonly divulge opinions which tend to degrade and vilify human nature. Popularity seems to be more their object than the sublime satisfaction of discovering and communicating useful truth. But were the generality of mankind convinced that they are capable of arriving at high degrees of excellence, and consequently led to aspire at it, moral evil would certainly decrease, and society would assume a fairer appearance. Much misery and much evil of all kinds will always be in it, during this sublunary state; but that share of it which is obstinately and presumptuously occasioned by our own folly, may certainly be removed by the correction of that folly.

What is done in the works of art may be effected in morals. Were a musical instrument to be placed in the hands of a peasant who had never heard or seen one, and were he told that he might, if he were to attend to it, call forth sounds from it which would delight every hearer, he would not be induced by any argument to believe the possibility of it. Yet let him regularly learn and practise a due time, and he will arrive at a degree of skill, which, though far from perfection, will appear miraculous on comparison with his original inability. So in life, if you inform your disciple that he is able to reach a great degree of excellence, and urge him to the attempt, he will infallibly make great advances, and improve to his own astonishment. But indulge his natural indolence, timidity, or despair, by expatiating on the irremediable weakness of human nature, and you effectually preclude even his endeavours, and add to his natural imbecility.

In the works of art, in sculpture, and in painting, in the subordinate operations of mechanical ingenuity, to what perfection does the hand of man attain? When a savage sees a watch, he adores it as a God. No earnestness of assertion would convince him that it was the work of a creature in all respects like himself, except in acquired dexterity. And can man improve himself so highly in the manual arts, in science, and in the productions of taste, and be unable to arrive at real and

solid

ſolid improvement in the fineſt art and the nobleſt ſcience, the art and the ſcience of conducting life? Half the attention and the conſtancy which is diſplayed in acquiring ſkill in an occupation by which money is to be gained, if beſtowed on the melioration of the morals, would uſually produce a moſt laudable character.

The ſtate of things is ſo conſtituted, that labour, well beſtowed and properly directed, always produces a valuable effect. Away then with the philoſophy which increaſes the weakneſs of our nature, by repreſenting it as inſuperable. Our perſonal excellence and happineſs, our friends and our country, are greatly intereſted in exploding the puſillanimous philoſophy. We ſhall indeed often fall; but let us riſe again undejected. Our failings will be great, but great alſo may be our virtues. At leaſt, according to an old and juſt obſervation, by aiming at abſolute perfection, we ſhall approach it much more nearly than if we ſat down inactive through deſpair.

The modern philoſophers and their diſciples, while they aſſert the inefficacy of philoſophy, of moral precepts, of religious influence, are inclined to maintain, that the effect which theſe only pretend to produce, may be produced by *modern honour*. I would only, in reply to their inſinuation, aſk them theſe queſtions: Who are the perſons who openly and proudly commit deeds at which the child of nature, even the ſavage, would ſhudder; who is guilty of the meaneſt, cruelleſt ſeduction; who wears a ſword ready to plunge it into the heart of his deareſt friend for a trifling provocation; who is ready to glory in breaking the peace of conjugal life, and ruining a family for the gratification of luſt or vanity? Unerring experience replies, Men of Honour; all, all honourable men.

From ſuch deluſion let the untainted mind of youth haſten to eſcape. To religion and morality let it fly for ſolid comfort, and for thoſe aſſiſtances which can alone repair the ruins made in the glorious fabric of human nature by the fall of Adam. With our utmoſt endeavours, both reaſon and divinity inform us we ſhall be at laſt greatly defective. Whither then ſhall we go

for

for ſuccour? whither ſhall we turn to find that which ſhall ſupport our weakneſs, and ſupply our defects? Philoſophy is often vain, but religion never. To the Deity we muſt have recourſe, who will certainly ſtrengthen us by his grace, and pardon our involuntary failures, of his infinite mercy.

No. V. ON THE FEAR OF APPEARING SINGULAR.

FEW among mankind are able, and perhaps fewer are willing, to take the trouble of preſerving with conſiſtency a ſyſtem of principles purely of their own ſelection. They ſeparate themſelves into large diviſions, which, like the flock conducted by the ſheep and bell, implicitly tread in the footſteps of ſome diſtinguiſhed leader. Thus is the pain of conſulting the judgment in every emergency eaſily avoided. The road becomes a beaten and a wide one, and each individual knows where to ſtep, only by ſeeing where another has ſtept before him.

But if the choſen leader is a treacherous or injudicious guide, the followers muſt inevitably be led into evil. Now it unfortunately happens, that the leaders, who are the moſt likely to attract the more numerous herds, are the leaſt likely to poſſeſs the more valuable qualities. For what is it which chiefly attracts popular notice? Vanity and effrontery. But theſe qualities imply diſpoſitions obviouſly inconſiſtent with an eminent and ſolid virtue; though almoſt always united with ſhewy, ſuperficial, and deceitful ornaments. Thus it happens, that the faſhionable modes of thinking and living, whatever modes in the viciſſitudes of human affairs aſſume that name, will ſeldom bear the teſt of inquiry, without diſcovering that they are futile and culpable. For who, indeed, was the great legiſlator who eſtabliſhed them? Some rich man, or ſome titled lady,

lady, diſtinguiſhed for boldneſs, but not for excellence; vain, preſumptuous, and dictatorial, though qualified neither by nature, parts, nor education, to preſcribe to others; and elevated to empire by a concurrence of favourable contingencies with their own aſpiring efforts. Once ſeated on the throne, their edicts are arbitrary and irreſiſtible. With the authority of their ſignature, there is no deformity which will not aſſume the appearance of beauty, no vice which will not appear with all the confidence which naturally belongs to virtue, but which the delicacy of virtue is too apt to conceal.

The ſubjects of theſe ſelf-erected tyrants are moſt truly ſlaves, though voluntary ſlaves; but as ſlavery of any kind is unfavourable to human happineſs and improvement, I will venture to offer a few ſuggeſtions, which may induce the ſubjugated tribes to revolt, and claim their invaluable birthright, their natural liberty.

To ſelect a model for imitation is one of the beſt methods of facilitating the acquiſition of any excellence. A living model not only ſhews what is to be done, but how. The imitation muſt not however be ſervile. A ſervile imitation is that which obeys the dictates of the maſter without venturing to inquire into the reaſon of it. The ſervile imitator paces in the ſame round, like the mill-horſe, whoſe eyes are hoodwinked, that he may not be allured by intervening objects to deviate from the tedious circle into a path of his own choice.

It may not be improper to premiſe, that to one individual his own natural rights and poſſeſſions, of whatever kind, are as valuable as thoſe of another are to that other. It is his own happineſs which is concerned in his choice of principles and conduct. By theſe he is to ſtand, or by theſe to fall.

In making this important choice, then, let the ſenſe of its importance lead him to aſſert the rights of man. Theſe rights will juſtify him in acting and thinking, as far as the laws of that community, whoſe protection he ſeeks, can allow, according to the ſuggeſtions of his own judgment. He will do right to avoid adopting any ſyſtem of principles, or following any pattern of conduct, which his judgment has not pronounced conducive to his happineſs, and conſiſtent with his duties; conſiſtent

consistent with those duties which he owes to his God, to his neighbour, to himself, and to his society. Though the small circle with whom he is personally connected may think and act differently, and may even despise and ridicule his singularity, yet let him persevere. His duty, his freedom, his conscience, and his happiness, must appear to every man, who is not hoodwinked, superior to all considerations.

Men act wrong scarcely less often from the defect of courage, than of knowledge and prudence. Dare to be wise, said an ancient; in order to which, it will first be necessary to dare to be singular. But in this and every other effort of virtue, it must not be extended beyond the golden mean. The singularity which I recommend will be as distant from moroseness and misanthropy, and from *ridiculous oddity*, as it will from an unmanly and pernicious submission to those who possess no reasonable right to take the lead.

If the immoderate fear of appearing singular is injurious to health, to fortune, to peace of mind, and to rational enjoyment, as perhaps on a farther consideration it will appear to be, I shall contribute something to promote happiness, by daring to be so singular as to recommend singularity.

Of the many young men who impair their constitutions by early excess and debauchery, a great part is instigated to irregularity by other motives than the impulses of passion. A young man just introduced into the company of his equals entertains a natural and a laudable desire to recommend himself to their favour. If they indulge in wine to excess, or in any other intemperance, he must do so likewise; for he cannot bear to be singular; and has, besides, received among his prudential rules, that he is to do as the rest do, wherever he may be fixed; and who will indeed dare to disobey the precept which commands us, While we are at Rome, to do as they do at Rome? Thus is the favour of our temporary companions gained; but our health, which was designed to endure, and with proper management would have endured, till the regular decays of nature, is greatly injured, or totally destroyed. I will then venture to exhort the young man, not so much to dread

dread the imputation of ſingularity, as to endanger the loſs of that which can ſeldom be completely regained, and without which no favour, no applauſe, no popularity, can give to life its natural ſweetneſs.

With reſpect to that ruin which conſiſts in the loſs of fortune and the accumulation of debt, it is daily effected by the fear of ſingularity. However their finances may have declined, they who are whirled in the vortex of faſhion, cannot retrench. They muſt act as their equals act; they muſt, like others, dreſs, keep a table, an equipage, and reſort to public diverſions. It is *neceſſary*, according to their ideas; and they tacitly acknowledge the obligation to be much greater than that of the moral duties. For who could bear to be *odd* people, to deſcend among the tribes of thoſe whom no body knows, and who indeed are diſtinguiſhed only for the plain qualities of probity and decency? Indulgencies and extravagancies are thus allowed, not altogether for the pleaſure they afford, but often from the horror of ſingularity. It is to be wiſhed, that the horror of a bankruptcy, a gaol, an elopement, or a piſtol, poſſeſſed even half the influence.

In deſtroying health and fortune, it certainly deſtroys that peace of mind, without which all external advantages whatever are but like muſic and painting, banquets and perfumes, to him who has loſt all powers of perception. But ſuppoſing health and fortune to be preſerved, yet the fear of ſingularity will lead to omiſſions and commiſſions which will one day hurt a conſcience not entirely inſenſible. Religion and duty enjoin many things which are real ſoleciſms and downright barbariſms in the ſchool of faſhion.

When health, fortune, and peace, are gone, it may be juſtly ſaid, no arguments are neceſſary to prove that there can be no enjoyment. But ſuppoſing them not entirely renounced, and that room were left for ſome degree of happineſs, even that little would be greatly leſſened by a too ſcrupulous fear of deviating from the arbitrary ſtandard of a fantaſtic mode. The taſtes, fancies, inclinations of other men, cannot pleaſe us like the genuine choice of our native feelings, directed by our own judgment. They may indeed be adopted, and

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even loved; but an adopted child ſeldom excites and ſoothes our ſenſibilities in a degree equal to that which is cauſed by our own.

Upon the whole, I cannot help thinking, that however Pride may vaunt herſelf, and Faſhion may aſſume airs of ſuperior wiſdom in her choice, it is ſingularly fooliſh, abſurd, and wicked, to decline any practices and any habits, however unuſual, which tend to render one ſingularly learned, ſingularly good, and ſingularly happy.

No. VI. ON THE INJUSTICE AND CRUELTY OF THE PUBLIC PRINTS.

A FREE country is that in which not only the life and the property of every individual, but his reputation alſo, which is often dearer to him than both, is ſecured by efficient laws. That country is not the land of perfect liberty, however it may arrogate the name, in which the character of every member may be traduced at pleaſure in the moſt public manner, without redreſs, and without the poſſibility of an adequate exculpation. Oppreſſion of the people may proceed from the people, as well as from the throne. The liberty of the preſs is pregnant with advantages; but the licentiouſneſs of it teems with evils which almoſt counterbalance them. It is true, that the liberty of the preſs is eſſential to civil liberty. But why do we eſtimate the enjoyment of civil liberty as one of the greateſt of human bleſſings? Confeſſedly becauſe it allows the natural and reaſonable poſſeſſion of all the rights and privileges of man, in his individual and connected ſtate; becauſe it ſecures to him the enjoyment of all which God, and reaſon, and nature, and his relative ſituation, have taught him to hold dear. That kind and degree, therefore, of liberty which cannot be ſecured without endangering all theſe, certainly fruſtrates the primary purpoſe

purpoſe of a free conſtitution. Liberty, under ſuch circumſtances, operates on human happineſs with all the malignant influence of real deſpotiſm.

Our own country is conſtitutionally the freeſt on the face of the globe. If there is any oppreſſion in it, it proceeds from the people, and operates on themſelves. And there is a ſpecies of oppreſſion peculiarly cruel and unjuſt, as it often falls heavieſt on the good, the peaceable, and the inoffenſive.

It is true indeed, that, in this free country, we have laws for the puniſhment of defamation; but nothing is more eaſy than to evade them. They do indeed ſometimes prevent an open attack; but they cannot preclude the various and indirect methods of diſſeminating calumny, which ingenuity, ſtimulated by malice or the hope of gain, can eaſily invent.

The laws of the Twelve Tables made defamation a capital crime. The puniſhment was rigorous. It appeared ſo in the age of Auguſtus, and was changed to corporal chaſtiſement. It was again rendered capital in the reign of Valentinian; and the ſeverity with which ſo wiſe a people as the Romans have treated this crime, from the earlieſt to the lateſt period of the empire, evidently ſhews how deep a ſenſe they entertained of its malignant influence on the happineſs of ſociety.

Our laws are indeed leſs ſevere. We are juſtly jealous of our liberty. I will not ſuggeſt an idea which can tend to the infringement of that liberty. I am grateful to Providence for having placed me in a country where it ſo glorioufly prevails. There is no ſacrifice, conſiſtent with innocence, which a good man would not make, to hand down the bleſſings derived from our fathers, undiminiſhed to our children. What I now ſay, tends moſt effectually to preſerve them inviolate: for, to expreſs my ideas in the words of the learned Blackſtone, *to cenſure the licentiouſneſs, is to maintain the liberty, of the preſs.*

Let, therefore, the laws remain unaltered, if the alteration is attended with danger. I will only appeal to the hearts, the manners, and the underſtandings of my readers, for the voluntary reformation which I would effect; a reformation to be begun and completed by

themſelves, and which, inſtead of impairing civil liberty, will enlarge it, and will render it a diffuſive good, almoſt unalloyed with evil: A rare condition of human felicity!

With reſpect to the writers and the publiſhers of calumny, they have uſually but one or two objects in view; either the gratification of malice, or the earning of a morſel of bread. But hunger and paſſion are powerful incitements. The whiſpers of reaſon, and juſtice, and humanity, will ſcarcely be heard amidſt the clamours of aſſailants ſo importunate. From them, therefore, we ſeek not redreſs by expoſtulation. We apply to the liberal ſentiments of a people truly free, who value their freedom, and who poſſeſs ſenſe enough to take the moſt effectual methods for its ſecurity. They will renounce the poor pleaſure which they receive from the gratification of an improper curioſity, when they find that it cannot be gratified without rendering the liberty of the preſs a ſource of miſery to the moſt deſerving in the community; when they find that the people's licentiouſneſs more effectually ſaps the foundation of liberty, than the ambition of a king.

Let us turn our attention to the origin and progreſs of that ſpecies of publication, which, within a few years, has become a general cauſe of complaint among all the moderate and the well-principled. A mechanic, after a ſervile apprenticeſhip, ſets up for himſelf in the art of printing; an art, which, when honourably exerciſed, is ſingularly uſeful and eſtimable: but, like many other arts, it is over-run by its profeſſors. The young adventurer therefore finds it neceſſary to ſtrike a bold ſtroke, as it is termed, in order to procure profit and diſtinction. If he has friends, and can raiſe money, and inſtitute a partnerſhip, he engages in a news-paper. In order to gain notice, it muſt not at firſt be moderate, but muſt abound in *abuſe, and in anecdote.* A letter-box is fixed to the window of ſome of the moſt public ſtreets in the metropolis. Into this receptable every dark aſſaſſin is tacitly invited to throw his poiſoned doſe. No man is ſo virtuous as not to have failings. No man is ſo inconſiderable as not to have enemies. Here then is an opportunity of expoſing thoſe ſecrets, which perhaps

haps the confidence of a friend has made known to the treacherous divulger of them, and of gratifying the malice of a coward with ſafety, and by the infliction of the cruelleſt injury; that malice which was perhaps excited only by a ſuperior degree of excellence. And who is to ſit in judgment on what is received? Thoſe who are often attentive to their intereſt alone. The papers are ſubmitted to the conſideration of ſome dark conclave; and if it ſeems good to the inviſible agents who ſit in it, the tale of infamy, the oblique inſinuation, the whiſper of ſuſpicion, the invention of the wanton, the belief of the credulous, the virulence of revenge, private pique, and public reſentment, are in a few hours ſcattered over the empire.

In this manner the public erects a deſpot over themſelves. One of their own order, and ſometimes one of the obſcureſt perſons in it, inſtitutes a tribunal, where ſentence is pronounced on all, frequently without due examination, and with little regard either to juſtice or to mercy. No other limits are aſſigned to the ſevere decree, which is iſſued out to brand with infamy the beſt of characters, than thoſe which are neceſſary to eſcape the letter of the law, and elude the poſſibility of a ſucceſsful proſecution. So unmanly and ſo cruel are the deciſions of this arbitrary tribunal, that even female innocence is often puniſhed with its ſevereſt ſentences. Virgin purity and conjugal virtue are blackened with aſperſions which can ſcarcely ever be wiped off. Wounds are inflicted on the parent's heart which no time can heal: for one great misfortune attending this mode of ſcandal is, that though all are ready to liſten to the calumny, few have candour and patience to hear and admit the vindication. Many ſee the attack, who never ſee the defence. Even if the vindication were as generally received as the abuſe, it is a cruel neceſſity to be forced reluctantly forward on the public eye, to be obliged to anſwer ſevere and groundleſs charges, brought by thoſe who have no right, either by the laws of God or of man, to diſſeminate throughout the world an unprovoked accuſation. Can that government be well regulated where a mechanic is able to erect himſelf into an oppreſſive tyrant, to wound the

heart of the innocent, break the peace of families, blacken the brighteſt characters, detract from the moſt allowed merit, degrade and lower every rank and dignity; and all this, not only with impunity, but with ſuch rewards from the public as enable him to amaſs an independent fortune, and laugh over the ruins on which he has erected his proſperity.

Many among us are heard to complain of the incroachments of government on the liberty of the ſubject, and of the oppreſſions of an adminiſtration. I aſk every individual in the Britiſh empire, Whether he ever experienced a ſingle act of oppreſſion from the crown, or the miniſters of the crown, equal to that which is daily and hourly inflicted, in the moſt arbitrary manner, by an Editor of a licentious public paper? The ſevere puniſhments of the law cannot be inflicted by any power known to our conſtitution without a formal proceſs, even on thoſe who deſerve them. But the operations of this engine of oppreſſion, in the hands of an intereſted plebeian, unappointed, unauthoriſed, and unoffended, inflict the ſevereſt penalty, without judge, jury, witneſſes, conſcience, or humanity.

The man who is guilty of this violation of every ſocial law, ſhall in the mean time think himſelf, and be thought by others, an honeſt man, and even a patriot; ſhall riot in plenty amidſt friends and riches; while he who takes from me my purſe, and the traſh which it contains, periſhes by the halter. All this is tolerated by a ſenſible and an humane people, becauſe, by the abuſe of language, the licentiouſneſs of the preſs is called its liberty.

I will not enlarge on the diabolical malignity of party and political abuſe, which flows through theſe dirty channels. Malignant as it is in its nature and origin, it is in this age too much deſpiſed to effect much miſchief. It as naturally purſues a miniſter or a ſucceſsful party, as a ſhadow the ſubſtance. If we take but a curſory view of paſt times, we ſhall ſee that many who are now juſtly conſidered as models of virtue and of political wiſdom, were in their day aſperſed with all the venom which a virulent party could expectorate upon them. On bad hearts and mean minds, the lucrative

crative advantages of high offices in the ſtate will always have an influence irreſiſtibly alluring. They will never reſt at eaſe without a participation of them; but will engage ſome poor dependent printer to admit their poiſonous writings into his paper, in hopes of ſupplanting others to make room for themſelves. The poor printer conſiders his fortune made when patronized by lords and dukes, and ſtands ready to calumniate the beſt men, or to ſpeak treaſon, for the confidential ſmile of a wretched and diſappointed, an envious and an ill-natured peer; perhaps of a villain, who would betray his country, becauſe he cannot procure a lucrative place in its adminiſtration.

I will not now expatiate on the wickedneſs of evil-ſpeaking, a topic which has been admirably treated by the divines of England. If any reader can want to be informed how inconſiſtent it is with the ſpirit of Chriſtianity, and how pregnant with moral and ſocial evil of every kind, I will refer him to all the moſt celebrated compoſers of ſermons in the Engliſh language. But, alas! they who delight in ſcandal poſſeſs diſpoſitions not to be delighted or reformed by a ſermon.

In the mean time, I will content myſelf with entreating readers of the better ſort, the humane, and the well-educated of the higher ranks (with whom I hope to prevail), to ſet a noble example, by refuſing to give encouragement to thoſe prints which are notorious for perſonal abuſe and the publication of family ſecrets. It is but juſt to ſay, that there are ſome reſpectable conductors of the prints, who exclude as far as human vigilance can exclude, all that is injurious.

For their own ſakes, I adviſe the Public not to take in pamphlets and papers which deal in all the bitterneſs of ſcandal. Their own hearts and happineſs will be injured by the peruſal of them, and they cannot know how ſoon it may be their turn to ſuffer by the malignity which they are ſo ready to enjoy.

It is indeed a melancholy truth, that the love of calumny, and the curioſity to be acquainted with the private affairs of all diſtinguiſhed characters, is become ſo general, that a work ſcarcely wants any other recommendation, if it profeſſes *perſonality and anecdote*.

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The prevalence of this cruel taſte precludes the reliſh of innocent and ingenious works on general topics. It will alſo infallibly habituate the mind to delight in cruelty and malice: for, as the feeling Goldſmith ſays, "like the tyger that ſeldom deſiſts from purſuing man "after having once preyed upon human fleſh, the "reader, who has once gratified his appetite with "calumny, makes ever after the moſt agreeable feaſt "on murdered reputation."

No. VII. ON FORMING A TASTE FOR SIMPLE PLEASURES.

TO argue againſt pleaſure in general, is abſurd. It is the law of nature, that every animal ſhould prefer the agreeable ſenſations to the diſagreeable. But it is incumbent on the moraliſt to explode thoſe pleaſures, which, though they are tranſient and unſatisfactory in themſelves, are yet found to occaſion pain which is permanent, and injury which is real.

Perhaps the moſt effectual mode of accompliſhing this purpoſe, is not to arraign pleaſure in general, but to ſubſtitute other pleaſures in their place; for man muſt be amuſed and delighted. Pernicious amuſements and poiſoned delights will be purſued, if others ceaſe to be obvious.

It is certain that nature has interſperſed a great number of objects capable of affording the livelieſt delight, without danger of future pain, and even with the probability of deriving improvement and additional pleaſure by reflecting on the paſt enjoyment. Such, indeed, are thoſe innocent pleaſures which we follow in early youth with cheerful ardour, and which we enjoy with ſincere delight, before we are vitiated and hardened by a long intercourſe with a depraved world; before the qualities of the lamb and the dove are exchanged for the leſs amiable wiſdom of the wolf and the ſerpent.

Amidſt

Amidſt all the improvements which we make in a ſtate of high civilization, we loſe ſome natural taſtes and propenſities which were favourable to virtue. We acquire wants and notions which diſturb our repoſe, and cauſe a feveriſh anxiety, ever thirſting, and never ſatisfied.

The ſimple and innocent ſatisfactions of nature are uſually within reach; and as they excite no violent perturbation in the purſuit, ſo are they enjoyed without tumult, and relinquiſhed without long or painful regret. It will then render eſſential ſervice both to happineſs and morality, if we can perſuade men in general to taſte and to form an habitual attachment to the genuine ſatisfactions of uncorrupted nature.

One of the firſt affections which the heart perceives, is filial piety. As years increaſe, this affection dilates, and extends itſelf to brothers and ſiſters, relatives and domeſtics. The child loves and is beloved by all around him. Amidſt the converſation, the events, the endearments and tender duties of a family, he finds full play for all his faculties and propenſities, and is often, by his own ſubſequent confeſſion, happier at this early age than in any period which ſucceeds.

I ſay then, that, were a taſte for this ſimple pleaſure retained, were men at a mature age led to ſeek their happineſs in domeſtic life, and in the exerciſe of the mild virtues of family offices, their enjoyments, though leſs brilliant and noiſy, would be purer, and more ſubſtantial. But, on the contrary, we ſee them no ſooner arrived at maturity, than they eagerly leave the neſt, and wander, in ſearch of an untried and an imaginary bliſs, through all the wilds of diſſipation. In the precipitate purſuit, innocence is often loſt; and whatever progreſs is made in refinement, little is added to ſolid happineſs. Our intereſt, as we falſely call it, and our honour, become the idols whom we devoutly worſhip, and on whoſe altars we ſacrifice health, truth, peace, and liberty.

We are indeed ſo deeply engaged in our objects, that we cannot advert to the beauties of nature, thoſe fertile ſources of unadulterated pleaſure. The young mind is always delighted with rural ſcenery. The earlieſt poetry

was

was paſtoral, and every juvenile poet of the preſent day delights to indulge in the luxuriance of a rural deſcription. A taſte for theſe pleaſures will render the morning walk at leaſt as delightful as the evening ridotto. The various forms which nature aſſumes in the viciſſitudes of the ſeaſons, will conſtitute a ſource of complacency which can never be exhauſted. How grateful to the ſenſes the freſhneſs of the herbage, the fragrancy of the flowers, all thoſe ſimple delights of the field, which the poets have, from the earlieſt ages, no leſs juſtly than exuberantly deſcribed! "It is all "mere fiction," exclaims the man of the world, "the "produce of a viſionary poet." He feels not, he cannot feel their truth. He ſees no charms in herbs and bloſſoms; the melody of the grove is no muſic to his ear; and this happens, becauſe he has loſt, by his own fault, thoſe tender ſenſibilities which nature had beſtowed. They are ſtill daily perceived in all their perfection by the ingenuous and innocent, and they have been moſt truly deſcribed by feeling poets, as contributing to pure, real, and very exalted delight.

Yet the poſſeſſor of extenſive lands, if he is a man of faſhion and ſpirit, forſakes the ſweet ſcenes of rural nature, and ſhuts himſelf up in a coffee-houſe, at a gaming-table, in a fetid aſſembly; and leaves that liberal air, which breathes over his lawns, and agitates his foreſts, to be inhaled by his menial ruſtics. He perverts the deſigns of nature, and deſpiſes the hereditary bleſſings of Providence; and he receives the adequate puniſhment in a reſtleſs life, perpetually ſeeking and never finding ſatisfaction. But the employments of agriculture, independently of their profit, are moſt congenial and pleaſing to human nature. An uncorrupted mind ſees, in the progreſs of vegetation, and in the manners and excellencies of thoſe animals which are deſtined to our immediate ſervice, ſuch charms and beauties as art can ſeldom produce. Huſbandry may be ſuperintended by an elegant mind, nor is it by any means neceſſary that they who engage in it ſhould contract a coarſeneſs of manners or a vulgarity of ſentiment. It is moſt favourable to health, to plenty, to repoſe, and to innocence; and great indeed muſt be the

the objects which juſtify a reaſonable creature in relinquiſhing theſe. Are plays, are balls, are nocturnal aſſemblies of whatever denomination, are debaucheries in all their modifications, which tend to rob us of ſleep, to leſſen our patrimony, to injure our health, to render us ſelfiſh, vicious, thoughtleſs, and uſeleſs, equivalent to theſe? Reaſon replies in the negative; yet the almoſt univerſal departure from innocence and ſimplicity, will lead the affirmative eſtabliſhed by a corrupt majority.

It is not without a ſigh, that a thinking man can paſs by a lordly manſion, the ſweet retreat deſerted by its falſely-refined poſſeſſor, who is ſtupidly carouſing in ſome tavern of a polluted city. When he ſees the chimney without ſmoke in the venerable houſe, where all the country was once welcomed to partake of princely hoſpitality, he cannot help lamenting that progreſs of refinement, which, in rendering the deſcendants of the great fine gentlemen, has left them ſomething leſs than men, through the defect of manly virtues.

The ſuperintendence of a garden might of itſelf occupy a life elegantly and pleaſurably. Nothing is better able to gratify the inherent paſſion of novelty; for Nature is always renewing her variegated appearance. She is infinite in her productions, and the life of man may come to its cloſe before he has ſeen half the pictures which ſhe is able to diſplay. The taſte for gardening in England is at preſent pure. Nature is reſtored to her throne, and reigns majeſtically beautiful in rude magnificence. The country abounds with cultivated tracts truly paradiſaical. But as the contemplative obſerver roams over the lawn, and enjoys the ſhade of the weeping willow, he is often led to enquire, "Where "is now the owner of this wilderneſs of ſweets? Hap"py man!" he exclaims, "to poſſeſs ſuch a ſpot as "this, and to be able at all times to taſte the pleaſure "which I feel ſpringing in my boſom." But, alas! the owner is engaged in other ſcenes. He is rattling over the ſtreets of London, and purſuing all the ſophiſticated joys, which ſucceed to ſupply the place where Nature is relinquiſhed. If he condeſcends to pay an annual viſit to the retreat, he brings with him

all his acquired inclinations; and while he ſits at the card-table, or at the banquet, and thinks of little elſe than promoting his intereſt at the next election, he leaves the ſhrub to bloſſom and diffuſe its ſweets in unobſerved ſolitude.

Can it be believed, that nature beſtowed beauty on the foliage of a flower but with a view to pleaſe? The fruit might be produced, in the ſame proceſs, without any richneſs and diverſity of colour. No other animals are ſenſible of their grace but the human; and yet the auſtere man of buſineſs, or the vain man of pleaſure, will arraign another with a face of importance for his admiration of a flower. He calls the taſte trifling and uſeleſs. But is not a refuſal to be pleaſed with ſuch appearances, like the malignant unthankfulneſs of a ſullen gueſt, who refuſes to taſte the moſt delicious dainties prepared for his entertainment?

Fine weather in England is the ſource of a very ſenſible pleaſure; but he who is engroſſed by vice or by buſineſs, will live half a life without admiring the beauties of a blue ſky, baſking in the vernal ſunſhine, or inhaling, with any conſciouſneſs of delight, the balſam of a weſtern gale.

A fondneſs for the pleaſing animals which Nature has placed around us, is another ſource of natural, and pure, and innocent amuſement. The plumage and the ſong of the bird were doubtleſs intended to delight the ear and the eye. Who can behold the playful lamb without complacency? The fidelity of the dog, the generoſity of the horſe, and the characteriſtic qualities, as well as ſhape and beauty, of all animated nature, are admirably adapted to charm the heart which is yet unſpoiled.

But, in a proper intercourſe and behaviour among our fellow-creatures, is found to conſiſt our principal and moſt conſtant delight. To do good, and to prevent evil, as far as the ſphere of our influence or activity extends, is an infallible method of deriving to ourſelves pleaſurable emotions. And if we conſult what paſſes in our boſoms, before our youthful ſenſibilities are blunted, we ſhall find, that Nature has taught us to find a great pleaſure in relieving diſtreſs, and in communicating enjoyment.

The

The cunning and the crafty, of whom conſiſts a great part of the buſy crowd, who derive an unnatural influence from the poſſeſſion of riches, will deem the ſimplicity which I have recommended, folly. Such men will deem truth alſo folly. They conſider virtue and truth as words invented to delude the ſimple ones; but, in truth, to retain through life ſomething of the ſimplicity of the infant, will render the improved and cultivated *man* truly wiſe. For, after all the refinements of falſe philoſophy, and the low arts of jeſuitical cunning, honeſty is our trueſt intereſt, and innocence our beſt wiſdom.

No. VIII. ON SUPPORTING THE DIGNITY OF THE COMMERCIAL CHARACTER.

IN a country whoſe inſular ſituation has rendered it naturally commercial, it is good policy to place the mercantile profeſſion in an honourable light. It has not uſually held a very high place in the eſteem of the world; becauſe, in moſt countries, it has been diſgraced by covetouſneſs and circumvention. Its primary object, the accumulation of money, has never appeared with any peculiar luſtre in the eyes of thoſe who have ſeen the beauty of diſintereſted patriotiſm and heroic generoſity. But at the ſame time it is certain, that a mercantile life affords ſcope for the diſplay of many good qualities and of virtues, which, from their ſublime and difficult nature, may conſtitute the merchant a practical philoſopher. It affords an ample field for the exerciſe of commutative juſtice, of ſelf-denial in refuſing to take advantages which might be taken with ſecrecy; of public virtue, in renouncing all traffic which may be injurious, and in forming every connection, and importing every commodity, which may facilitate the operations of a government. Large and extenſive commerce, inſtead of narrowing, has enlarged the ſentiments; and Britiſh merchants have, in the two laſt centuries, joined to the moſt exemplary integrity the moſt liberal beneficence.

But

But it must be owned, that they then appeared most respectable when they least departed from their character. In the present age they have relinquished the simplicity of their ancestors, and, endeavouring to import the airs and manners of a court into a counting-house, have lost their dignity, and diminished their profits.

It has been said, that, in order to preserve a political constitution in its original purity, it is necessary, at certain intervals, to reduce it to its primary principles. Deviation from right, and encroachment on error, are the natural consequences of human infirmity, in the progressive revolution of affairs. It is therefore as necessary in morals, as well as in politics, to return to principles and manners, which have been insensibly forsaken in the pursuit of innovation. The manners of our predecessors, which we now despise as simple and unrefined, will be found, in many instances, more conducive to national and personal happiness, than the nominal improvements which have superseded their prevalence.

I will not dwell on general observations, but will deduce my remarks from real life. I assert then, that the merchants of the present times are often ashamed of the appellation of citizens. My proof is the fact, that they desert the city. No sooner have they accumulated a competent sum, than the noble mansion in a venerable street is forsaken for a smart house in a new-built square. The principal's presence is thus removed from the scene of action, and opportunities are afforded for every species of idleness and fraud in the inferior substitutes. Habits are contracted, and intimacies formed in the new region, most opposite to the spirit of commerce. Late hours and irregular banquets are not at all conducive to that punctuality which constitutes one of the most valuable and graceful qualities of a merchant. Great and enormous wealth can indeed support almost any species of folly; but the misfortune is, that they who have their fortunes to make will emulate those who have already made them. To live at next door to a peer, or in a street with dukes, is a temptation scarcely resistible. Add to these solid satisfactions of the merchant himself, that the

the ladies of the family feel new degrees of gentility, like inſpiration, gradually come upon them, as they approach more nearly to the purlieus of St. James's.

It was not thus that a Greſham raiſed a fortune and a reputation equal to the moſt renowned perſonages of his time. It was by induſtry, temperance, regularity, cloſe application, and by leaving thoſe to follow faſhion, whoſe ſhallow intellects could find no other object to purſue. It would have been an ill exchange to have given up the title of the father of the greateſt city in Europe, and the glory of founding a college and a forum, for the petty vanity of reſiding in the circle of faſhion; to have deſcended from the firſt in the neighbourhood of the Exchange, to be the laſt in Bloomſbury-ſquare.

I would adviſe the merchant, who would live with real dignity, to make the city reſpectable, if he does not find it ſo, by diſplaying his worth in it. Worthy conduct, with a noble fortune, will aggrandize any place. Adorn that place in which it is your lot to be fixed. Where, indeed, ought men to expend their opulence more readily than where it was amaſſed, where their characters are well known, and their virtues valued?

Many evils reſult from this general emigration. The influence of good example is loſt among the numerous tribe of apprentices, clerks, and journeymen, who are the riſing generation of merchants; but whoſe morals are early tainted with the foulеſt infection, by running after thoſe pleaſures which their ſuperintendant appears to purſue. They are led to deſpiſe that city and thoſe manners which their maſter avoids.

The city of London, as a corporate body, at this moment ſuffers by the contempt of the members who owe it moſt reſpect. When the rich and reſpectable leave it, who are to fill its magiſtracies and its council? The lower orders of tradeſmen, deſtitute of education and of liberal views, are thruſt forward into office by nothing but their own pragmatical activity. No wonder a corporation has loſt its influence and ſullied its honours, when thoſe who ſtand forth as its leaders, are the meaneſt of its members. The opulent and moſt conſequential have packed up their effects,

as ſoon as they have acquired all they wanted, and have left the pillaged city to ſtand or fall, as it may happen. They are no longer citizens, but eſquires at their villas, and courtiers within the vicinity of the palace. Like the reptile, they have dropped their ſlough, and ſhine with a new outſide.

A time has been, when merchants only retired to their villas, when they had accumulated their fortunes. They now begin with a villa, as if it were as neceſſary as a warehouſe; and end with bankruptcy as naturally, as unreluctantly, and as unbluſhingly, as if it had been the object of their purſuit. Diſtreſs and difficulty excite meanneſs and artifice; fraud and injuſtice ſoon follow, and the dignity of the Britiſh merchant is ſunk in the ſcandalous appellation of a ſwindler.

The fall of the eminent trader involves many in the misfortune. His wife and children are reduced from a life of ſplendor and luxury to indigence and obſcurity; to a ſtate which they bear leſs patiently, becauſe they have been accuſtomed to indulge their vanity and pride without controul. Vice, and every ſpecies of miſery, are encreaſed by this imprudent conduct in his own family, and poverty brought into the houſes of his inferior aſſiſtants or dependants, who have either entruſted him with their money or their labour unrepaid.

This is a picture drawn from life: what it repreſents daily occurs; and the whole of it is occaſioned by the merchant's departure from his natural and his moſt becoming character.

In order to reſume that character, let him conſider what virtues his way of life particularly requires. He will find them to be induſtry, honeſty, and frugality. Let him ſeriouſly purſue them, nor be aſhamed of them when he has ſucceeded in his purſuit. Let him not dread the appellation of a dull cit, nor any of thoſe jokes, with which the envy and malice of witlings conſole themſelves on another's ſuperiority. Let him aſſure himſelf, that the character of a man of integrity and benevolence is far more deſirable than that of a man of pleaſure or a man of faſhion. The one is like ſolid gold, the other like tinſel; the one is like a venerable oak, the other like the gaudy and tranſitory tulip;

tulip; the one is always bleſt and a bleſſing, the other frequently a curſe. Dare to be what you are, is a rule which, if obſerved, would ſecure to men that happineſs, of which the greater part never ſee any thing but the phantom, the cloud in the place of the goddeſs.

The great ſource of mercantile miſcarriage is, that the merchant uſually begins in a mode of life which ſhould naturally adorn a ſucceſsful concluſion. He begins with a rural retreat, and with expenſive relaxations; with thoſe pleaſures, which ſhould, in the regular courſe, be reſerved as the reward of his toils, and the comfort of his age. He ſpends his active days in ſuperfluous and unſatisfactory indulgence, and dooms the winter of life to want, to neglect, to a priſon, or an alms-houſe. I believe it is true, that at leaſt as many bankrupts are made by miſconduct in ſome mode or other, as by misfortune.

In a country abounding with merchants, ſome of theſe hints will be thought uſeful, and will be adopted by a few in the riſing generation; and the example of a few may in time be generally followed.

No. IX. AN IDEA OF A PATRIOT.

HEROIC virtue, in its moſt exalted and comprehenſive degree, though often talked of, is not often found. It muſt indeed, like all other prodigies, appear but ſeldom. To produce it, it is neceſſary, that, beſides an union of the fineſt qualities of the heart and underſtanding, many favourable contingencies, which no abilities can command, ſhould at once concur in the ſame individual. A Cæſar and an Alexander, if they had been born in a cottage, and had lived in a village, would have died in obſcurity. And, indeed, after all the eulogia paſſed upon them, it may be fairly aſked, Whether, if ſuch had been their lot, mankind would have had cauſe to lament?

None but a barbarous age can admire the bloody triumphs of the mere conqueror; but every age muſt agree in extolling the true patriot. True patriotiſm, which

which is a ſpecies of heroic virtue, and indeed the beſt ſpecies of it, does not often occur. The name is daily aſſumed, and in our country has loſt its dignity by proſtitution. It has been wantonly laviſhed on thoſe who, from the worſt motives, have fomented faction, and kindled the flames of rebellion. It has been denied to the preſervers of their country, and given to the deſtroyers of it; to thoſe who have ſpent their lives, and exerciſed the abilities they poſſeſſed, in producing all thoſe evils which the inſtitution of civil ſociety was intended to extirpate. They evidently have had little elſe in view, but to render themſelves of conſequence enough to be bought by an adminiſtration. Selfiſhneſs and ſpite, pride and a levelling principle, are qualities very unfavourable to the exiſtence of civil liberty. Yet theſe qualities have appeared very clearly in thoſe who have laboured to be forced into power by the efforts of a faſcinated populace.

For the ſake then of thoſe orders among us whoſe hearts are good and truly Engliſh, but who, from the want of education or leiſure, are not apt to think coolly when they ſelect a favourite leader, and who are often cruelly and infamouſly deluded to their own deſtruction, and to the detriment of that liberty which they love, I will endeavour to deſcribe thoſe characters which appear to me truly patriotic.

In the firſt place, I would lay it down as an axiom, That a bad man cannot be a patriot. Even the badneſs of his heart may lead him to aſſume all the deceitful appearances of patriotiſm. His envy, and his diſappointed avarice and ambition, will induce him to revile thoſe who are in poſſeſſion of lucrative and powerful employments, and this will appear like a noble oppoſition to the ſtrides of power. To ſerve his purpoſes, he will declaim on liberty, and this will ſoon collect a party. Fools and wicked men abound. Theſe ſoon herd together, and even render themſelves of ſome conſequence by their numbers. Honeſt men are drawn in by the violence of the vortex, and the wicked leader at laſt gains his ſelfiſh views, or at leaſt obtains the ſatisfaction of mortifying thoſe whom he envies. At all events, he is ſure of one pleaſure, which is congenial to his heart, that

that of ſpreading miſchief and confuſion. I repeat, therefore, that it will be neceſſary to convince ourſelves, that a bad huſband, a bad father, a profligate and an unprincipled man, cannot deſerve the name of a patriot, unleſs it is given him, as it may indeed in the preſent age, by way of deriſion. A man of no private virtue muſt want principle; and a man who wants principle cannot be actuated by pure motives. He cannot entertain ſo liberal and exalted an affection as a rational and diſintereſted love of his country. He may accidentally be right in his oppoſition to a court; but he is a bad man, and it is not ſafe to truſt to him. He may be the wicked inſtrument of gratifying my ſpleen or his own; but yet I will think before I lift up my hand to vote for him, leſt his turbulence, united with the power which I may aſſiſt in delegating to him, may involve my country in war, riot, and rebellion. I will remember what is paſt, and be cautious.

Much has been ſaid by the declamatory on the ſubject of a Patriot King. I believe it happy for a nation when the King has not the qualities of a declaimer's patriot, of an active warrior, or a contentious orator. When a King poſſeſſes or arrogates the character of a hero, his reign uſually terminates in deſpotiſm or in blood, or in both. Moderation, juſtice, lenity, and a pacific diſpoſition, are the moſt valuable, if not the moſt glittering, jewels, in a crown. I almoſt fear to apply the remark to the King of England, leſt I ſhould be ſuſpected of that adulation which my heart abhors. But truth muſt prevail over every conſideration. And when I ſee the chief magiſtrate a good ſon, a good huſband, a good father, I think it a favourable preſage of all that is amiable and uſeful to ſociety. When I ſee him alſo poſſeſſing fortitude enough to turn a deaf ear to the continued and importunate petitions and remonſtrances of a deluded faction; when I ſee him rendering the judges independent; when I ſee him anxious to preſerve the liberties of the meaneſt of his ſubjects, delighted with benevolent actions, ſeeking and enſuing peace from motives of philanthropy, yet proſecuting war with all the ſpirit of a righteous cauſe; encouraging arts, and promoting diſcoveries; when I ſee all his

amiable

amiable diſpoſitions, and his many laudable acts, I venture to pronounce George the Third a Patriot King. The characters of Kings are indeed but uncertainly known while they live; and I am ready to confeſs, that I derive my ideas of the King of Britain from no other ſources but public acts and popular reports.

If a peer of the realm is found to be in conſtant oppoſition to the meaſures of a miniſtry, it is eaſy to know the cauſes and the extent of his patriotiſm; for a miniſter cannot always be wrong. He is conceited, turbulent, yet unemployed by his King. He luſts after power, and hopes to acquire it by force, ſince it cannot be obtained by gentler means. He will even patronize rebellion, and diffuſe diſcontent throughout a kingdom, to injure a few individuals, whoſe riches he covets, and whoſe glory he envies. Though he ſhould ſign a hundred proteſts in a ſeſſion, and daily eructate his invectives againſt the moſt reſpectable men in the nation, we will not be miſled; for his patriotiſm is paſſion, his perſeverance avarice; and the ſame tongue which is ready to revile his King and embroil his country, is uſually as prone to blaſpheme his God. When they whom the conſtitution has appointed hereditary guardians of the laws, and liberties, and religion of their country, become the patrons of lawleſs licentiouſneſs, and the ſcoffers at every thing held ſacred, why heſitate their countrymen to ſtrip the coronet from their heads, and trample their honour in the duſt? Tear off their ermine, and their ſtar which belies their breaſt; for the meaneſt of their menials, who performs his humble duties in his humble ſtation, is far nobler than they.

With reſpect to the noiſy declaimers, and the quieſcent inſtruments of power in the lower order of ſenators, let expreſſive ſilence ſpeak their praiſe. Their patriotiſm is well underſtood. The one ſide reſembles Cerberus barking for a ſop, the other reſembles him when, after he has received it, he wraps himſelf up in his own warm ſkin, and enjoys a comfortable doze. The public has been too long deluded to be again deceived. They ſee the faults, and no longer admire, but look for a palliation of them in the common weakneſs of human nature. Of all oppoſitions, ſcarcely any have

have been more violent and active, and ſcarcely any leſs ſucceſsful, than that which has haraſſed Great Britain during the greater part of the preſent reign. And of all venality, none was ever more openly avowed than the preſent.

Let us turn our attention to the military order. And here let us be cautious how we again illuminate our houſes, and render our throats hoarſe with reiterated acclamations. However we may dote on their names, they are no patriots, who, from party principles, or from perſonal pique, voluntarily ſuffer our perfidious and inveterate enemy to inſult the Britiſh flag unchaſtiſed. They are no patriots who wiſh to exalt the military above the civil power. They are no patriots who, in a time when every arm ought to wield the ſword for the country whoſe money they have received, relinquiſh their employ becauſe they hate a miniſter. They are no patriots, but they are poltroons. In which claſs they alſo are to be placed, who, when ſent on the ſervice of their country, laviſh the money with which they are entruſted in unneceſſary profuſion, and return without an action; who bluſter and boaſt, but who, to ſave their lives, will loſe their honour, and endanger their country's exiſtence.

And what are thoſe writers to be called, who, perverting the perfection of reaſon and the fruits of learning, endeavour to unſettle all our principles under the pretence of aſſerting our liberty? Patriots ſhall we call them? Alas! when I ſee them obviouſly actuated by pride and vanity, and, for the ſake of being diſtinguiſhed, endeavouring to overturn good order and tranquillity, I call them the enemies of the human race; and if I did not pity their deluſion, I might execrate their names.

I will venture to advance an opinion rather paradoxical, but certainly well founded. We are not always to look for the trueſt patriotiſm in public life. Selfiſh motives commonly inſtigate the noiſy votaries of ambition and popularity. But what can influence him who ſecretly ſerves his country in the retired and unobſerved walks of private life? His motives muſt be pure, and he *is a patriot*. Men of fortune and dignity, who, dwelling

dwelling peaceably in the habitation of their fathers, ſet a good example; who endeavour to preſerve from the rude hand of innovation all the good inſtitutions of our anceſtors; who are given to hoſpitality, ready to aſſiſt with their preſence and their purſe in all public buſineſs and uſeful charities;—men of this kind *are truly patriots.* Every good man is indeed a patriot; for a good man is a public good. But poverty, and an humble and a private ſtation, muſt circumſcribe the beneficial influence of goodneſs; and it does not fall to the lot of many in a century to poſſeſs the power and good diſpoſitions of a *North.*

What I now ſay may be attributed to intereſted adulation. I regard not the imputation, for it is not juſt. I never heard any ill of the man, or of the miniſter, but what proceeded from the venomous tongue of faction; and I know that he has ſteered the veſſel of ſtate amidſt ſuch ſtorms as would have daſhed it in pieces, if thoſe patriots, who increaſed the tempeſt, that they might make themſelves neceſſary in the diſtreſs, had been employed as pilots.

No. X. THE RESPECTABLENESS OF THE CLERGY.

IT ſeems probable at firſt ſight, that an order of men who devote themſelves entirely to the inſtruction of their fellow-creatures, would be exempted from envy and from hatred. As their ſtudies are all peaceable, and their labours directed to the diffuſion of goodneſs, and conſequently of tranquillity, both public and private, it is natural to ſuppoſe, that the better part of the world would view them with favour, and that even the profligate would behave to them with diſtant reſpect.

But it is certain, that ſcarcely any other body of men, ſo large and conſiderable, has been more unkindly repreſented than the clergy. Every patron of infidelity, after he has endeavoured to pierce the ſides of the Redeemer, has pointed the envenomed weapon at his miniſters.

niſters. But the patrons of infidelity have always been found, on cloſe examination, no leſs ſuperficial and ſophiſtical, than malignant and preſumptuous. They have therefore fixed indiſcriminately upon every clergyman the imputation of certain odious ſentiments of a political nature; as if it were conſiſtent with reaſon or common ſenſe, that the moment a gentleman of liberal education receives a legal commiſſion from the eccleſiaſtical ſuperior, to pray aloud in an aſſembly, or to read a moral diſcourſe in it, all his political ſentiments are rendered erroneous, or diſſimilar to the opinions of thoſe among his countrymen who are equally enlightened.

That the clerical ſentiments in politics, ſuppoſing that the clergy entertain any peculiar to their profeſſion, are favourable to liberty, and to all the deareſt rights of mankind in the aggregate, and of individuals in their relative connections, might be clearly proved by hiſtorical evidence. My deſign, however, does not permit me to expatiate in the field of hiſtory, or it were eaſy to produce very ſignal inſtances of the noble ſtand they have made for liberty, religious as well as civil.

They have alſo ſometimes been hoſtile to freedom. But ſo have many of the nobles of the time, and many of the inferior orders of the laity. They purſued that conduct, and adopted thoſe ſentiments, which were agreeable to them as men, and not peculiar to them as clergymen. If they acted from honeſt principles, though their judgment ſhould be impeached for error, no cenſure will fall on their clerical profeſſion. When they became clergymen, they did not renounce their rights as men; nor their liberty of judging and acting, which they derived from the conſtitution of that community to whoſe ſupport they contributed.

It is inequitable to judge of the preſent race of eccleſiaſtics from the ſpecimens afforded in the darker ages. The clergy were then ignorant, vicious, and ſuperſtitious; but the laity were more ſo. The clergy were ſuch as they muſt have been without ſufficient employment, without examples, without learning, and without the means of acquiring it. Yet, even in this unpromiſing ſtate, they were ſerviceable to letters. They tranſcribed and

and preſerved books, though they often did not underſtand what they wrote, nor know the value of their treaſures. They preſerved thoſe lamps of learning by which, though, from a defect in the management, they afforded them but a glimmering light, the world has been ſince illuminated.

But to enter on the merits or demerits of clerical individuals of paſt ages, is to engage in a ſubject too diffuſive to be conſiſtent with our preſent purpoſe. It may be more advantageous, as well as practicable, to conſider this reſpectable body as it appears at preſent. The clergy, like all other orders in ſociety, undergo a change in the progreſſive viciſſitude of times and manners; and what might truly characterize them in one age, will miſrepreſent them in another. In the papal church, and under an abſolute government, they are totally different from a Proteſtant and an Engliſh clergy; they are not ſo much the miniſters of the humble Jeſus, as the tools of a ſecular and eccleſiaſtical deſpot. In a country like ours, they imbibe the liberal ſpirit of our civil conſtitution; and, by the light of their learning and morals, greatly add to the general luſtre of their country. Indeed, if they ceaſe to be reſpected and valued, the fault is their own. Improper levities, compliances, or negligences, diminiſh that dignity which their office, their labours, their learning, and their manners, would otherwiſe mantain.

Of the dignitaries of the church it is no uncommon topic to complain. They are often repreſented as the drones of ſociety; as idly ſlumbering in a ſtall, without making any return to the public for the eaſe and luxury which they abundantly enjoy. Selfiſhneſs, avarice, and voluptuouſneſs, are ſatirically attributed to them as their diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics; and it is remarked, that they would be blanks in ſociety, were not their exiſtence demonſtrated by an unceaſing purſuit of private gratification.

But, in anſwer to theſe acrimonious reflections, we may ſay in general, that all ſituations which poſſeſs many happy circumſtances with little labour or anxiety, will naturally excite envy and malignity. The dignitaries of the church enjoy that eaſe and thoſe innocent pleaſures

pleaſures which men uſually purſue when they poſſeſs a competency without the neceſſity of ſolicitude. That they do not ſtep out of their ſphere, or engage in the conflicts of party, redounds to their honour. Parochial employments are regularly filled by other perſons. To invade the province of the officiating clergy would be to diſturb that order which conſtitutes one of the beauties of religion itſelf, as well as of all eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments. If they are decent and pacific, benevolent in their neighbourhood, hoſpitable to the inferior clergy, and virtuous in private life, they are, notwithſtanding the appearance of indolence, both ornamental and uſeful to the church and to ſociety. They are more reſpectable than if their reſtleſſneſs led them to be at the head of an aſſociation, or to recommend polygamy. And with reſpect to the expediency of dignities in the church, I am not of the ſame opinion with thoſe penurious philoſophers whoſe ideas of utility are circumſcribed within the limits of actual profit. As human nature is conſtituted, ſomething is to be allowed to external appearance, and ſomething to innocent enjoyment. I would neither ſtrip a king nor a prelate of thoſe outworks which either defend him from contempt, or facilitate the exerciſe of his juriſdiction, or contribute to his complacency.

If perſons thus exalted to eaſe and honour, and thus exempted from exertion, lower themſelves, by remarkable levity, by rendering themſelves moſt conſpicuous at all public places, and by patronizing vanity, they then become truly deſpicable, and richly deſerve the public reſentment. That the majority of dignitaries preſerve their character, and are reſpectable, I firmly believe; and I ſay it without partiality or adulation, for I have not the happineſs to know or to be known to a ſingle individual in the church above the rank of a pariſh prieſt. I ſhould indeed conſider it as preſumptuous in me to give my opinion, if I did not conſider at the ſame time, that the natural liberty of a man is not loſt by the want of eccleſiaſtical dignity.

The character and office of a pariſh prieſt, when uniformly and completely maintained, are moſt uſeful and moſt honourable. A worthy pariſh prieſt is the father

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of his parish, the guardian of the poor, the instructor of the ignorant, the protector of the injured, the friend of all; even of those who are deaf to his instructions, and despise his profession. If any human office can be justly called godlike, it is the office of a parish priest.

But when I turn my attention to real facts, I frequently find the ministers of parishes neither the objects of love nor of esteem. This is sometimes occasioned by the prevalence of infidelity, and sometimes, as it must happen while the clergy are men, by their own want of merit and bad behaviour. But the grand cause of their losing their influence is, that the laity, in this age of scepticism, grudge them their tythes. The decay of religion, and the contempt of the clergy, arise from this source.

I will not enter fully on the subject of tythes; but I will make a cursory remark. Let the laity ask themselves, by what tenure any one among them has a better right than any other to reap the produce of any particular field, and to exclude others of the laity from it? They must answer, by the laws of the country in which they reside. But the same laws have given the clergy a right to a decimal part. If there is an unreasonableness in the laws in one respect, there is also in the other. And a man who has no land at all, may as justly complain that his neighbour assumes an exclusive right to the acres contiguous to his dwelling, as the possessor of the acres, that the clergyman claims a tenth part of their produce. The rights of the clergy stand on a basis more solid than the national constitution. The objections raised to them originate in selfishness, greediness, and the unfeeling stupidity of irreligion. I rejoice that the clergy have often spirit enough to prosecute their legal claims against the harpies of avarice.

If the incumbent made no claim on the purse of his parishioner, he might always be loved and esteemed, or at least suffered to live and die in peace. But his wife and his children are dear to him, and have as good a right, by all the laws of God and man, to be fed and clothed, as those of the esquire or farmer who litigates his claim. He is cruel, and worse than a Heathen, who endeavours not to provide for his own child,

child, by receiving what is juſtly his due; ſince, if he does not receive it, that child, the very moment he expires, may be ſpurned as a beggar from the door of the churliſh peaſant who robbed the father of his right.

But where is the utility of the clergy? exclaims the boor, who pays his land-tax cheerfully, but refuſes his tythes. Surely, one might anſwer, national good does not conſiſt only in the number of ſhips which arrive in our ports, the extent of our dominions, and the abundance of our armaments. Good morals and internal tranquillity are in reality ſuperior to all theſe, whatever oſtentation they may diſplay. Theſe are indeed, according to their original deſign, only inſtrumental to the eſtabliſhment of internal peace and ſocial happineſs, though they are daily abuſed to effect the purpoſes of avarice and ambition, and are always talked of as the firſt objects. If, then, good morals and internal tranquillity are the chief national good, as they certainly are in the eye of Heaven and of diſpaſſionate reaſon, the clergy muſt be allowed to deſerve their very moderate emoluments: for let us conſider how many millions are laviſhed in the ſupport of armaments, and how very ſmall a pittance, in compariſon, ſupports the parochial clergy, to whoſe important ends, internal peace and happineſs, the armaments are only ſubordinately, mechanically, and remotely ſubſervient. That miniſter or financier, whatever the world may think, poſſeſſes a narrow and unphiloſophical mind, who eſtimates the good of a people ſolely by the extent of their commerce and the largeneſs of the revenue. When theſe are in their moſt flouriſhing ſtate, the people as individuals, and therefore the nation, may be in their decline. Luxury and vice of every kind may be diffuſing miſery among all the individuals in the nation; and can there be a national happineſs independent of the happineſs of the majority of individuals, or conſiſtent with their miſery? According to the wretched ſyſtem of worldly-minded politicians, there can. Nay, even the miſery of individuals is often promoted and encouraged, in order to increaſe this political happineſs, which exiſts only an ideal phantom. Intoxication and gaming, for inſtance, as they increaſe the revenue, are

at this moment tacitly encouraged throughout England. The conſumption of ſpirituous liquors, though it lays millions at home, helps to ſupport thouſands in thoſe wars abroad, which ambition and wickedneſs render politically neceſſary.

But the clergy recommend innocence, contentment, temperance, and all the moral virtues, with all the bleſſings and comforts which attend them; and with reſpect to their national utility, let a liberal and benevolent man conſider, what an advantage it is to have moral inſtructors diffuſed over the kingdom, eſtabliſhed in the remoteſt villages, not only among the poliſhed, but among the rudeſt of our countrymen, who would probably relapſe into barbariſm and ſavage brutality, if their minds were not cultivated by weekly lectures, powerfully recommending, by the moſt awful ſanctions, all that is humane and friendly to human nature and civil ſociety. And yet the public, who pay a ſoldier liberally and cheerfully, often, in this age, beſtow with reluctance what the law of God and of their country has allotted to the clergyman, and what his order can claim by the moſt ancient preſcription.

I will here pay that tribute of reſpect which juſtice owes to the Diſſenting Miniſters. The gravity of their manners, and their judicious conduct in a variety of inſtances, has deſervedly procured them a very conſiderable ſhare of public eſtimation. Many among them, beſides a Watts, have illuſtriouſly adorned human nature.

With reſpect to the order of Curates, on whom the eſſential buſineſs of a national clergy chiefly devolves, all the reſpect which is due to the clergy in general, and to the active clergy in particular, is indiſputably due to them. The mediocrity of their ſtipends may indeed degrade them in the eyes of the rich vulgar; in the eyes of thoſe, who feeling the obvious good of money, and inſenſible to other excellence, idolize Mammon, and deſpiſe thoſe who poſſeſs it not in ſuperfluous abundance. But the candid and the conſiderate will conſider their poverty as one of their chief honours. That they are capable of maintaining a decent appearance, and diſcharging the expences which are neceſſary

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to their subsistence, with an income less than that of many mechanics, reflects more true honour on them, than would be derived from the possession of an ample fortune. Though pride may spurn them, God will be their protector; and when they perform their arduous duties with conscientious regularity, even bad men must yield them an involuntary deference.

When indeed they affectedly assume the character of libertines and rakes, and dress themselves so as to suggest an idea that they are ashamed of appearing as clergymen; when they take the lead in public diversions; when they are eminently careless and immoral; then it is neither to be wondered nor lamented, that they are punished with universal contempt. But the world is prone to be malignantly censorious, and to require a degree of perfection which no mortal can uniformly display, whatever may be his office, whatever his virtues, and whatever his intentions. Continued and uniform profligacy can scarcely be treated with too much rigour, when it appears in those who have separated themselves to inculcate good precepts, and to exhibit good examples; but when we find ourselves inclined to censure a clergyman for a small fault, and without palpable reasons, let us ask our own hearts, whether, if we were in his place, we should be able to preserve an unerring rectitude?

I have thus used that liberty of speaking my sentiments which every man possesses, with a view to vindicate the general character of the clergy. They are indeed sufficiently able to defend themselves; but every individual ought to contribute something to the general defence, when the attack is general. And I have the rather undertaken this business, from a conviction, that when the clergy are despised, they will degenerate; and that with them will decline the morals, the learning, the religion, and the importance of my country.

No. XI. ON THE TENDENCY OF MORAL PROFLIGACY TO DESTROY CIVIL LIBERTY.

IT appears from a review of the world, that wherever man is denied the enjoyment of civil liberty, he not only loſes much of his natural happineſs, but much of his natural dignity. His ſpirit is broken, his ſentiments are depraved, and he ſeems contented to lead a life merely animal. Athens ſtill ſtands, but where are the Athenians?

It is not indeed true, that the arts of painting, ſculpture, and architecture, cannot flouriſh in the land of deſpotiſm. The productions of theſe contribute to the pleaſure of the luxurious, conſidered only as ornamental furniture; they will therefore be bought at a high price; and where the artiſt is rewarded amply, ingenuity and manual labour will eagerly co-operate in producing works of imitation. The hope of gain will excite competition, and competition will produce emulation, and emulation excellence. Hiſtorical facts might be adduced to prove the truth of this theory; for the beſt productions of art have appeared in the arbitrary governments of Europe, and ſome of the worſt in the republican. Indeed it is by no means certain, that the imitative arts, by politic perverſion, may not be rendered ſubſervient to the purpoſes of introducing deſpotiſm. A nation of Dilettanti are not likely to make a very manly ſtand againſt the encroachments of that royal power under which they find their imbecility protected. We ſhall not eaſily find a Hampden in a connoiſſeur. When public places of pleaſure multiply in the capital, and the encouragement which ſhould be given to active virtue and to literature, is transferred to artiſts, the jealous guardian of the liberties of his country may juſtly increaſe his vigilance. The arts ought to be encouraged; but they ought alſo to be kept in their proper ſubordination: for what are they in themſelves? After all that the conceited and the pretenders

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to taſte have advanced, they are but means of amuſement. They are indeed the means of moſt elegant and delightful amuſement; but that which is only the means of amuſement, muſt poſſeſs a lower rank than purſuits which tend to give ſtability to empire, to enlighten the intellects, to reform the morals of the people, and to found political happineſs on the broad and maſſy baſis of moral virtue, manly fortitude, and religious confidence.

But it is not with the virtues as with the arts. If they thrive at all in an arbitrary government, they thrive like exotic plants, which can never poſſeſs their native vigour or maturity. But what is life in circumſtances which preclude every generous exertion which can render life rationally valuable? When man is compelled to ſleep away his exiſtence, or ſpend it in a wearisome reiteration of the animal functions, life is not life; and it is, we may therefore conclude, a rational, as well as enthuſiaſtic paſſion, which every independent Engliſhman feels for liberty.

But liberty is too often miſunderſtood, and the miſtaken ideas of it ſometimes endanger its continuance. Vice alſo, when it becomes enormous and univerſal, is inevitably fatal to liberty. I mean then to derive an additional argument in favour of virtue, from its connection with liberty, and from its efficacy in giving ſtability and authority to the political conſtitution of a free country. And certainly, if the love of our country is ſo general as the pretenſions to it, many who are addicted to libertine practices and principles will be led to encourage, by precept and example, that decency and regularity, that temperance and induſtry, that religion and fortitude, which conſtitute a better bulwark againſt attacks upon our liberty, than our boaſted fleets and armies. I believe they will find, that the ſeveral national vices, which I ſhall preſently enumerate, are peculiarly adverſe to the prevalence and permanency of legal freedom.

Without examining the definitions of politicians or logicians, I call that a ſtate of liberty in which every man's perſon, property, and free agency, is ſecured or circumſcribed by laws, which have been agreed to by the

the majority of the people at large, either directly or indirectly; either in their own persons, or by a representation primarily and tacitly, if not expressly, allowed by the people, for the convenience of public debate; which public debate could never come to a conclusion, if the debating assembly were composed of every individual in an empire. Salutary restraint is, then, the very principle of liberty; and they who, from their restless dispositions, or from misapprehension, endeavour to throw off every species of coercion, are in reality enemies to that freedom which they pretend to promote.

But of these the number is small, in comparison with others; who, without thinking of consequences which appear to them remote, slide imperceptibly into a conduct, which, though it does not destroy the fair fabric of liberty at once, and by an assault, gradually saps its foundations.

Luxury will always be indulged to excess in a rich and powerful country, abounding both with internal and imported commodities of that species which can be only subservient to pleasure and ostentation. Every year brings an increase to luxury; for, as it is founded in a great measure on vanity, the rich wiill be perpetually seeking distinction. As soon as they have displayed one mode of luxury, it is imitated; and, in order to obtain distinction, another mode must be adopted; and this dereliction and adoption proceeds in perpetual succession. No fortune can supply unbounded expence; and the consequence is, that the great and noble are soon impoverished: but vanity is, in general, a more powerful principle than patriotism; and therefore, for the sake of supporting a figure in life, they who ought to stand up as the guardians of constitutional liberty become ready to make any sacrifice to a minister, in exchange for a lucrative employment. The middle and the lowest ranks follow the example of the nobles, by incurring expences which neither their patrimonies nor their personal industry can support. They therefore become alike dependent and servile, and in the extremities of their distress are ready to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. But besides that luxury, by

by involving all orders in diſtreſs, deprives them of their independence, it naturally tends to weaken the underſtandings and vitiate the morals of the people. But no weak or bad man can ever entertain a proper love for liberty, or have it in his power to aſſert it when infringed. They who are immerſed in voluptuouſneſs, whether of the table or of any groſſer kind, will conſider liberty and the love of our country as names only fitted to adorn a poem, a romance, or a ſchool-boy's declamation. They who build houſes, and heap up coſtly pictures and furniture, with the money of an honeſt artizan or mechanic, will be very glad to be emancipated from the hands of a bailiff by the ſale of their ſenatorial ſuffrage. Luxury indeed diſpoſes to general indolence; and he who is overcome by its deceitful allurements, will think it a fortunate change to be freed from the noiſe and turbulence of liberty by the dead repoſe of deſpotiſm.

Levity, which is indeed intimately allied to luxury, is fatal to liberty. They who reſolve never to think ſeriouſly, will ſuffer themſelves to be robbed of all that is valuable, without reluctance. Nothing can be more remote from levity, than the characters of thoſe among the ancients who diſtinguiſhed themſelves as the champions of the natural rights of mankind. The very idea of Brutus, in the dreſs and with the grimace and the levity of a modern Frenchman, and of a modern Engliſhman who apes the Frenchman, is laughable. Whatever is great and valuable in ſociety requires ſpirit and vigilance to perfect and preſerve it; for nothing great and valuable is perfected and preſerved by chance. But how ſhall he contribute an adequate ſhare to the common maſs of public good in the ſenate, in the field, on the bench, in the pulpit, or in the family, whoſe mind is engroſſed by troubles and vanities, and who ſhrinks from all that is ſerious, as the bane of his fancied happineſs? They who have raiſed an empire have always been grave and ſevere; they who have ruined it have been uniformly diſtinguiſhed for their diſſipation. It is the predominance of mental ſtrength which contributes chiefly to ſuperior ſtrength of empire. If it be true, then, that we are adopting the levities of a foreign nation

tion which has never known the ſweets of liberty; if it be true, that the greater part of the people are for ever in purſuit of ſcenes of diſſipation; if it be true, that our manners are univerſally trifling, and our converſation futile; it is time that thoſe who value liberty ſhould take the alarm, and endeavour to ſet better examples; leſt it ſhould appear, that amidſt all our pleaſures we are preparing ſlavery for our children; an idea which ought to embitter the ſweeteſt of them in the midſt of enjoyment.

The want of a liberal and manly education will render us unable to perceive the value of liberty. It will alſo prevent the acquiſition of that dignity and authority of mind which alone can make a ſucceſsful ſtand againſt the encroachments of power. Ignorance is mean, and cannot make thoſe generous ſacrifices which our duty to our country demands, when its liberties are endangered. A mind deſtitute of a proper education will be eaſily deluded by the ſophiſtical arguments of thoſe, who, to ſerve ſelfiſh purpoſes, are ready to explain away every dear-bought privilege, with a view to make converts to doctrines detrimental to the rights of mankind. And with reſpect to thoſe who are educated indeed, but educated in the manners and ſentiments of a hoſtile country, though they may be deſcended from Tudors and Plantagenets, their hearts are not Engliſh. They conſider all our virtues, and all our religious ſcruples, as inſular prejudices; and if Engliſhmen were to permit them to import their improvements, they would eſtabliſh a *Grand Monarque*, and ſhew that they think the world was made for dukes, marquiſes, lords, and counts, to take their paſtime in; and that ſuch canaille as the body of Engliſh freeholders are only fit to be cuiſiniers or perruquiers, to decorate their apiſh perſons, and tickle their vitiated palates.

It needs no argument to prove, that an inordinate attachment to ſelf-intereſt, that the exceſſive love of money or venality, tends directly to ſubvert our liberties; for he who is inclined to do any thing to promote his ſordid intereſt, will ſell his ſhare of his country's rights as ſoon as he finds a willing purchaſer. When the African prince pronounced, that all was venal at Rome,

Rome, Roman virtue was departed. Liberty would not linger when deſerted by Virtue, but left the throne to Deſpotiſm, who aſſumed the imperial purple, and for ages curſed mankind.

An exceſſive zeal for liberty, like all exceſſive zeal, injures the cauſe it means to ſerve. Faction and ſedition diſgrace free countries, and introduce ſuch evils as make the lovers of repoſe almoſt wiſh for the tranquillity of deſpotiſm. Ebullitions will ſometimes ariſe in a free community, like humours in a healthy body; and, when they preſerve the limits of moderation, they are to be conſidered as ſymptoms of a ſound conſtitution. But when they riſe too high, and continue too long, they are like a gangrene, which gradually diffuſes itſelf till it deſtroys the vitality of the ſubject from which it originates.

It will indeed be found, that all conduct which is extenſively injurious to individuals, is injurious to the body politic. And I hope it will be adopted as an inconteſtible truth, that political good, like moral good, when it is ſolid and ſubſtantial, is always the reſult of an adherence to reaſon and virtue, prudence and religion.

No. XII. ON THAT KIND OF WISDOM WHICH CONSISTS IN ACCOMMODATION AND COMPLIANCE, WITHOUT ANY PRINCIPLES BUT THOSE OF SELFISHNESS.

THERE is a mean and ſneaking kind of wiſdom (I can allow it no better epithet) which marks the preſent times, and conſiſts in a compliance with the inclinations, and an aſſent to the opinions, of thoſe with whom we converſe, however oppoſite they may be to our own, or to thoſe we complied with or aſſented to in the laſt company we were in. And this cunning and cautious proceeding is honoured with the name of true politeneſs, good ſenſe, and knowledge of the world; or, to ſpeak in the technical language of faſhion,

taking the ton of your company. When it is closely examined, it appears to originate in timidity, and in a mean and excessive regard to self-interest, and to be utterly inconsistent with the principles of honesty. "A "person of discretion," says the sensible and satirical Collier, "will take care not to embarrass his life, nor "expose himself to calumny, nor let his conscience "grow too strong for his interest; he never crosses a "prevailing mistake, nor opposes any mischief that "has numbers and prescription on its side. His point "is to steal upon the blind side, and apply to the affec-"tions; to flatter the vanity and play upon the weak-"nesses of those in power or interest, and to make his "fortune out of the folly of his neighbours."

I say then, that a man who adopts this conduct, however plausible his appearance, however oily his tongue, and benevolent his professions, is not an honest man. He would not for the world contradict you, or express his disapprobation of your taste or your choice in any respect. But why would he not? Is it because he really thinks and feels as you do? Impossible. For he will assent to opinions diametrically opposite, as soon as he goes from your door to your next neighbour. Is it because he is so abundantly good-natured as to fear lest he should give you pain by contradiction? Believe it not. It is true, indeed, that he fears to contradict you; but it is only lest he should lose your favour; and it is a maxim with him to court every individual, for he may one day want his assistance in accomplishing the objects of his covetousness or his ambition. While, therefore, he is entering into your views, approving your taste, confirming your observations; what think you passes in his mind? Himself is the subject of his thoughts; and while you imagine that he is concurring with your opinion, and admiring your judgment, he is only meditating how he may most easily insinuate himself into your favour. Such cautious, timid, subtle men are very common in the world, and so are highwaymen and pickpockets.

It must be owned, with regret, that this deceitful intercourse is the general mode of converse among those elevated beings who have separated themselves from the rest

reſt of mankind, under the name of People of Faſhion. In this exalted region, you muſt learn to take the tone of every body with whom you converſe, except indeed the vulgar. With the grave you muſt be grave, and with the gay you muſt be gay; with the vicious you muſt be vicious, and with the good and learned as good and learned as the beſt of them, if you can; but if you are not quite adept enough in diſſimulation to have attained this excellence, it is ſafeſt to keep out of their way; for they are apt to ſpeak diſagreeable truths, and to be quite inſufferable *bêtes*. This verſatility and duplicity of the *grande monde* may indeed conſtitute a man of the world; but let it be remembered, that a book of ſome authority claſſes the world, when ſpoken of in this ſenſe, with the devil.

The over-cautious wiſe men of theſe times are very fond of getting into the company of an honeſt man; and, by throwing out leading ideas, or by aſking queſtions, they contrive to learn all his ſentiments without uttering an opinion of their own. I have known ſome of theſe cloſe gentlemen of the *volto ſciolto* and the *penſieri ſtretti*, ſo reſerved and myſterious, and at the ſame time ſo inquiſitive, that you would have imagined them commiſſioned ſpies of an American congreſs, or members of the privy-council at home, if you had not perceived that their heads were as empty as their hearts were cowardly. If, after you have opened yourſelf, you aſk their opinion, they anſwer, that really they do not know what to ſay, they have not quite made up their minds; ſome people they find think one way, and ſome another. With reſpect to themſelves, though they were very doubtful indeed, yet your arguments ſeem almoſt to have made them converts to your opinions; and, whatever the event may be, you have fully proved that reaſon is of your ſide; or, if it is not, you have ſhewn amazing ingenuity and abilities in ſaying ſo much on a ſide which cannot be defended. Then, after having gained their point of ſounding your ſentiments, the converſation turns to the topics of the weather or the wind.

They diſplay a moſt outrageous affectation of candour. They are always ready to make allowances for the infirmities

firmities of human nature, except when a rival or an object of their hatred is to be injured, and then, though it is not their diſpoſition to be cenſorious, though it is well known they always palliate what they can, yet, in this particular caſe, they will whiſper, what they would not ſpeak loud, nor have go any farther; they will whiſper, that they believe the report, however horrid, to be ſtrictly true, and indeed rather a favourable account; for if you knew as much as they do, they inſinuate, that you would be ſhocked indeed: but, however, they declare they will not in candour diſcloſe what they know. So that we may conclude, as indeed is often the caſe, that badneſs of heart is allied with their puſillanimity. They are affectedly kind when their ſelfiſh views are to be promoted by kindneſs, and really malevolent when the ſame purpoſes are more effectually ſerved by malevolence.

Where this compliance and aſſent, this caution, and this candour, ariſe from a natural tenderneſs of diſpoſition and ſoftneſs of nature, as they ſometimes do, they are almoſt amiable and certainly excuſable; but as the effects of artifice, they muſt be deſpiſed. The perſons who poſſeſs them are, indeed, themſelves dupes of their own deceit, when they think others are deluded by it. For exceſſive art always betrays itſelf; and many, who do not openly take notice of the deceiver, from motives of delicacy and tenderneſs for his character, ſecretly deride and warmly reſent his ineffectual ſubtilty. Cunning people are apt, as it has been well obſerved, to entertain too mean an opinion of the intellects of thoſe with whom they converſe, and to ſuppoſe that they can be moved like puppets by the ſecret wires which they play behind the curtain. But the puppets are often refractory, and the ſpectators always diſpleaſed.

Lucrative views are the uſual motives which allure the ſycophant to his mean ſubmiſſions. But where lucrative views are greatly predominant, a truly reſpectable man is ſeldom found. Covetouſneſs is ſo greedy a paſſion, that it not only attracts to itſelf its proper objects, but ſwallows up almoſt every other affection. Man indeed naturally and properly is attached to himſelf;

ſelf; but a liberal education, united to a good nature, corrects the exceſs of ſelfiſhneſs, and enables us to find enjoyment in many purſuits, which are conducive to the good of ſociety. But when all is made to concentre in ſelf, and when the mind is ſo contracted as to ſee no good but lucre, it brings its proper puniſhment upon itſelf, by a voluntary condemnation to a ſlaviſh, a timid, and an anxious exiſtence. So that the contemptible characters which I have been deſcribing are, in truth, enemies to ſelf, even when they are excluſively devoted to it.

There are others who adopt the puſillanimity of mean compliance and ſervile aſſent, by a wiſh to paſs quietly and ſmoothly through life without the aſperities or noiſe of oppoſition. This wiſh may certainly be carried to exceſs. Every man is bound by his religion, and by his regard to himſelf, his family, and his country, to ſeek peace. But it will not be ſecured by unmanly ſubmiſſions. A proper degree of ſpirit and fortitude is as neceſſary to preſerve tranquillity as a pacific diſpoſition. Internal peace is infinitely more valuable than external; but he who is always afraid to own his ſentiments, and is led into the mazes of deceit and duplicity, will find, amid his fears and his contrivances, his boſom agitated with emotions by no means tranquil and ſerene. Add to this, that the ſpiritleſs ſervility of a mean but faſhionable time-ſerver, will often invite inſult, as it will deſerve contempt.

In truth, every ſenſible man forms opinions on every thing which preſents itſelf, and every honeſt man dares to avow them, when there is no evident reaſon for their concealment. If a man has virtuous, religious, and patriotic principles, he injures all thoſe cauſes which he muſt wiſh to ſerve, by fearing to declare openly, on proper occaſions, his inward conviction. It is indeed his duty to do ſo; for it is a part of virtue to add confidence to the virtuous, by profeſſing a wiſh to be of the number.

But that wiſdom, which conſiſts in political compliance, without regard to the antiquated notions of moral fitneſs or unfitneſs, is no leſs viſible in public than in private life. It is not the honeſt upright man, whoſe heart

heart is as open as his countenance, who is judged worthy of great offices and employments. It is the varnished character, which, while it holds out the best professions, is capable of co-operating in all the mean artifices, which are often, according to the narrow system of worldly politics, politically necessary. In the employments of state, he, who cannot meanly submit to time-serving, will not often be able to serve himself, or be permitted to serve his country.

In public measures, particularly those which concern religion for instance, it is insinuated, that not what is strictly and morally right, or strictly and morally wrong, is to be considered so much, as what is seasonable, what the times and the present system of manners will bear. At one time, popery is to be encouraged, because we are threatened with an invasion, and the papists are a numerous and rich body, capable of greatly assisting us as friends, or annoying us as enemies. At another time, popery is to be discountenanced by writings, by laws, by axes, and by faggots. At one time, Christianity is to be propagated by missionaries wherever we make a discovery; at another, we are to visit and revisit the isles of the Southern ocean, and not a wish be expressed by the rulers civil or ecclesiastic, for the conversion of the poor Otaheiteans and Ulieteans. At one time, ecclesiastics shall rule the nation; and at another time, not be permitted to share the least authority. The times will not bear ecclesiastical interference, and therefore the spiritual lords shall sit and hear the insults of a graceless peer, or see laws enacted which affect the protestant religion, or the general state of national manners and ecclesiastical establishments, in silent acquiescence, as if they were the novices of a Pythagoras, instead of men commissioned by the awful sanction of Jesus Christ and the laws of their country. They content themselves with the practice of moderation; but there are circumstances, in which the most christian forbearance becomes treachery and cowardice. But the times will not bear ecclesiastical authority. Now who is it, who makes the times what they are? Even those, whose excessive caution and cowardly policy leave a doubt on the minds of the many, whether that

that zeal is not totally deficient which is the genuine result of sincerity. If policy only regulates the conduct of the clergy, the poor sceptical laity will be inclined to suspect, that the noble system of the established religion is founded on that policy, which they see is the chief means used to support it. I have no doubt, but that both the civil and ecclesiastical departments of the state would flourish more successfully, if that conduct was followed in their support, which shines openly in the eyes of mankind as the result of truth and honesty, than when those petty tricks and that temporizing management are pursued, which lead the governed to despise the persons, and disobey the authority, of the governor. Let legal authority openly dictate what is right, when measured by the great eternal standard of truth and justice, and then let legal power enforce the practice. The times would then be conformed to the rulers, and not the rulers, by a strange perversion, to the times.

But here I pause, and ought perhaps to have stopt before, if it be true, as Bishop Hurd informs us in his Sermons, "that to dictate in such matters to persons "wiser than ourselves, or to persons who, *by their stations and characters, should, in all reason, be supposed "wiser*, is a *manifest indiscretion*, and can never be "attended with any good consequences. Were *we "ever so able to instruct*, or were they *ever so much in want "of instruction*, *prudence* would suggest a very different "conduct. It would recommend to us all the honest "arts of *insinuation and address*; it would oblige us to "watch the *fittest seasons and opportunities*, or perhaps to content ourselves with the *silent* admonition "of a good example. Or, were *there nothing in the "rank and condition of those* we would work upon, "to *restrain us to this caution*, we might even be required to shew a condescension *to their prejudices "and humours*." I then must be silent; but let old Collier be permitted to speak. "To come," says he, "from the state to the church. He that would be an "agreeable ecclesiastic, must survey the posture of things, "and examine the balance of interests, and be well "read in the inclinations and aversions of the genera-

"lity;

" lity; and then his buſineſs will be, to follow the " loudeſt cry, and to make his tack with the wind. " Let him never pretend to cure an epidemical diſtem- " per, nor fall out with a faſhionable vice, nor queſtion " the infallible judgment of the multitude."

No. XIII. A PRUDENT AND ELEGANT CHARACTER EXEMPLIFIED IN THE CHARACTER OF ATTICUS.

FEW among the ancient Romans have approached ſo nearly to a perfect character as Atticus. To the nobleſt inſtances of exalted wiſdom and liberality, he added a peculiar elegance of life, ſeldom obtained even by thoſe who probably poſſeſs a taſte for its beauty.

But his reputation has of late been ſullied by detraction. The Abbé St. Real, in the wantonneſs of idle ingenuity, has attempted to derogate from his character, by diſputing the veracity of his biographer, Cornelius Nepos. Unluckily for St. Real, the principal paſſage he has quoted from Cicero to convict the hiſtorian of falſehood is manifeſtly corrupt, and, when reſtored to its obvious ſenſe, proves nothing to the purpoſe, as is ſhewn by the elegant Melmoth in his agreeable remarks on Cicero's Eſſay on Old Age. The Abbé, however, takes upon him to repreſent this amiable man as a time-ſerver, and an artful politician, whoſe wiſdom conſiſted in little elſe than a ſagacious attention to his own ſafety.

The penetrating Middleton has alſo ſpoken leſs favourably of the friend of Cicero, than might have been expected. He inſinuates, that his Epicurean principles taught him a ſelfiſh caution, totally incompatible with the cordiality of friendſhip. To this prudent, though not very honourable ſelf-regard, he attributes it, that not one letter of Atticus was publiſhed, though not leſs than ſixteen books of Cicero to Atticus have deſcended to the preſent times.

There

There is, it must be owned, on a slight review, a great appearance of insincerity in the conduct of Atticus. But St. Real has too hastily rejected the honourable testimony which Nepos has borne in his favour; and Middleton seems to have been too much prejudiced against him, by a single passage of Seneca. Seneca asserted, that if Cicero had not drawn Atticus into notice, he would have remained unknown. This, however, may be true, without diminishing his merit. How could he have come down to posterity, but together with the fame of his illustrious friend; since he took not an active part in politics, which might have given him a place in the page of history, and erected no literary monument for the preservation of his own glory?

If, therefore, the character of his contemporary Cornelius Nepos is established as an historian, the fame of Atticus remains undiminished by the cavils of modern enquirers.

In answer to the aspersion, that Nepos was a mean writer, and was little regarded by his own age, it must be affirmed that he was, as we are told by Gellius, the familiar friend of Cicero. It is said also, that a statue was erected to him by his countrymen of Verona. If there are defects in any of the writings that pass under his name, they are attributed to the interpolations of Æmilius Probus. His Atticus is allowed to be his own, and a masterpiece of sweet and polished composition. Cicero speaks highly of him, and he is particularly honoured by Catullus and both the Plinies. He lived at the same time with Atticus, and, had he asserted any notorious untruths, would soon have been refuted by the general voice of living witnesses, who are seldom disposed to be rashly credulous to the voice of praise.

But, setting aside authority, it may be said, that the uncontroverted matter of fact, the intimate connection of Atticus with opposite parties, with Cæsar and with Pompey, with Antony and with Brutus, with Cicero, Clodius, and Hortensius, is a proof of uncommon management, not to say duplicity. From this fact, however, I would deduce a different inference. His friendship

ſhip with the greateſt men of his times, whatever were their political diviſions, does honour both to his moderation and integrity. Had he concerned himſelf with faction, no cunning could have ſecured him from the hatred of ſome of the parties, and a ſubſequent proſcription. Had he been mean, baſe, artful, he would have been unanimouſly deſpiſed by all. They who differed in every thing elſe, would have agreed in expoſing one whoſe villainy deſerved contempt, and whoſe influence was not great enough to juſtify connivance. The truth ſeems to be, that he was ſuperior to the little views of party. His general philanthropy was ſtronger than his particular attachments, and in his warm regard for the excellence of his friends, he overlooked the failings that cauſed their animoſity. Though he lived at a diſtance from the capital, and choſe not to exert his influence, if he poſſeſſed any, yet ſuch was his perſonal dignity, that, in his intercourſe with Cicero and the greateſt men of his times, he never appeared in the light of an inferior. They ſeem indeed to have treated him with an unuſual deference, and he appears to have poſſeſſed that true dignity, which reſults from real wiſdom and virtue, and which no artifice or external oſtentation can produce.

That he cultivated a friendſhip with them, and did them every good office that humanity directed by judgment could ſuggeſt, is true. But we have it on record, that he courted not the fortunate alone. To thoſe who wanted his protection, and were leaſt likely to repay it, he was moſt ready to afford it. He protected the wife and family of Antony when reduced to ruin, and he ſent money to Brutus when involved in want.

Devoted to letters, and to all the ſtudies that refine and elevate the liberal mind, he was idolized at Athens, where he found a ſweet aſylum from the tumult of faction. His ſituation in this place was truly enviable. In the centre of taſte and learning, with a diſcernment that enabled him to ſelect and reliſh the beſt productions, beloved by all around, and even courted by the great, he ſpent his time at Athens, in all the elegant tranquillity of the refined Epicurus. His departure from it was publicly lamented, and the regret of that diſcerning

discerning people reflects an honour on him, far greater than an ovation.

Though a man of taste, of letters, of important connections, he was yet enabled to give attention to domestic œconomy. His family regulations were peculiar indeed, but such as became a philosopher. All his servants were qualified to read to him, and to perform the office of amanuenses. He was elegant, says Nepos, not magnificent; splendid, not profuse. The unaffected beauty of delicate neatness was his object, not the ostentation of opulence.

A very distinguished and honourable part of his character was his utter detestation of deceit. He abhorred a lie. A circumstance which renders the charge of a time-serving duplicity improbable. That he appeared little affected with his friend Cicero's misfortunes, is not so much to be attributed to insincerity, as to some apparently weak conduct in Cicero himself. And perhaps Cicero complained of it without sufficient reason; for adversity is querulous.

The goodness of his disposition was displayed in the constancy of his attachments, and in the delight he felt in the acts of beneficence; but it shone no where more amiably than in his behaviour as a son and a brother. His mother lived to the age of ninety; and he used to mention with pleasure, that he never was involved with her in one moment's disagreement. He gloried in living on the most affectionate terms with his sister.

He died in a good old age. But it is to be lamented, that, after a long life, as perfect as reason unassisted could render it, he precipitated his death by refusing sustenance, in order to avoid the recurrence of a painful disease. He acted consistently with the principles of Epicurus, who taught that pain was the greatest evil. A mind like his would have been the first to have refuted such errors, had he lived in a later age, and been the disciple of a greater than Epicurus.

Delineated by the pencil of Cornelius Nepos, he shines forth a beautiful portrait. Nor can I see the use of those minute enquiries, which tend to lower an elevated character. The more examples of human excellence, the more honourable and advantageous to human

human nature. Truth, indeed, in all cases should be carefully investigated; but when it already appears established on the side of virtue, that restlessness of learned research, which seeks to sap its foundations, is not only impertinent, but criminal.

No. XIV. ON NOVEL READING.

IF it be true, that the present age is more corrupt than the preceding, the great multiplication of Novels has probably contributed to its degeneracy. Fifty years ago there was scarcely a Novel in the kingdom. Romances, indeed, abounded; but they, it is supposed, were rather favourable to virtue. Their pictures of human nature were not exact, but they were flattering resemblances. By exhibiting patterns of perfection, they stimulated emulation to aim at it. They led the fancy through a beautiful wilderness of delights, and they filled the heart with pure, manly, bold, and liberal sentiments.

Those books also, which were written with a view to ridicule the more absurd romantic writers, are themselves most pleasing romances, and may be read without injury to the morals. Such is the immortal work of Cervantes. Perhaps the safest books of entertainment for young people are those of decent humour, which excite a laugh, and leave the heart little affected.

Books are more read in youth than in the advanced periods of life; but there are few perfectly well adapted to the young mind. They should be entertaining, or they will not be attended to. They should not be profound, for they will not be understood. Entertaining books there are in great numbers; but they were not written solely for young people, and are therefore too unguarded in many of their representations. They do not pay that reverence which Juvenal asserts to be due to the puerile age.

That

That Richardſon's Novels are written with the pureſt intentions of promoting virtue, none can deny. But in the accompliſhment of this purpoſe ſcenes are laid open, which it would be ſafer to conceal, and ſentiments excited, which it would be more advantageous to early virtue not to admit. Dangers and temptations are pointed out; but many of them are dangers which ſeldom occur, and temptations by which few in compariſon are aſſaulted. It is to be feared, the moral view is rarely regarded by youthful and inexperienced readers, who naturally pay the chief attention to the lively deſcription of love, and its effects; and who, while they read, eagerly wiſh to be actors in the ſcenes which they admire.

The cultivated genius of Fielding entitles him to a high rank among the claſſics. His works exhibit a ſeries of pictures drawn with all the deſcriptive fidelity of a Hogarth. They are highly entertaining, and will always be read with pleaſure; but they likewiſe diſcloſe ſcenes, which may corrupt a mind unſeaſoned by experience.

Smollet undoubtedly poſſeſſed great merit. He would however, have been more generally read among the polite and refined, if his humour had been leſs coarſe. His Peregrine Pickle has, I am convinced, done much miſchief; as all books muſt do, in which wicked characters are painted in captivating colours. And it is adviſeable to defer the peruſal of his works, till the judgment is mature.

The writings of ſuch men do, however, diſplay the beauties of that genius, which allure and rewards the attention of the diſcreet reader. But the memoirs, private hiſtories, and curious anecdotes, imported from our neighbouring land of libertiniſm, have ſeldom any thing to recommend them to peruſal but their profligacy. Yet even theſe, adorned with ſpecious titles, and a pert vivacity of language, have found their way to the circulating libraries, and are often obtruded on the attention at an early age.

The Engliſh preſs has teemed with ſimilar original productions. That coarſe taſte, which was introduced in the reign of Charles the Second, was greedily adopted

adopted by the juvenile reader. At an inflammatory age, the fuel of licentious ideas will always find a ready reception. The ſentimental manner ſeems of late to have ſupplanted it. But it is matter of doubt, whether even this manner is not equally dangerous. It has given an amiable name to vice, and has obliquely excuſed the extravagance of the paſſions, by repreſenting them as the effect of lovely ſenſibility. The leaſt refined affections of humanity have loſt their indelicate nature, in the ideas of many, when dignified by the epithet of ſentimental; and tranſgreſſions forbidden by the laws of God and man, have been abſurdly palliated, as proceeding from an exceſs of thoſe finer feelings, which vanity has arrogated to itſelf as elegant and amiable diſtinctions. A ſoftened appellation has given a degree of gracefulneſs to moral deformity.

The languiſhing and affectedly ſentimental compoſitions formed on the pattern of Sterne, or of other leſs original Noveliſts, not only tend to give the mind a degree of weakneſs, which renders it unable to reſiſt the ſlighteſt impulſe of libidinous paſſion, but alſo indirectly inſinuate, that the attempt is unnatural. What then remains to ſupport the feeble efforts of remaining virtue, but the abſence of temptation?

Such books, however pernicious their tendency, are the moſt eaſily obtained. The prudence of their publiſhers ſuggeſts the expediency of making them conveniently portable. Every corner of the kingdom is abundantly ſupplied with them. In vain is youth ſecluded from the corruptions of the living world. Books are commonly allowed them with little reſtriction, as innocent amuſements; yet theſe often pollute the heart in the receſſes of the cloſet, inflame the paſſions at a diſtance from temptation, and teach all the malignity of vice in ſolitude.

There is another evil ariſing from a too early attention to Novels. They fix attention ſo deeply, and afford ſo lively a pleaſure, that the mind once accuſtomed to them cannot ſubmit to the painful taſk of ſerious ſtudy. Authentic hiſtory becomes inſipid. The reſerved graces of the chaſte matron Truth paſs unobſerved, amidſt the gaudy and painted decorations of Fiction.

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The boy who can procure a variety of books like Gil Blas, and the Devil upon Two Sticks, will no longer think his Livy, his Salluſt, his Homer, or his Virgil pleaſing. He will not ſtudy old Lilly, while he can read Pamela and Tom Jones, and a thouſand inferior and more dangerous novels.

When the judgment is ripened by reflection, and the morals out of danger, every well-written book will claim attention. The man of application may always find agreeable refreſhment, after ſeverer ſtudy, in the amuſing pages of a Fielding; but the fungous production of the common Novel-wright will be too inſignificant to attract his notice.

The extreme inſipidity of ſome of our later Novels, it might have been ſuppoſed, would have prevented their reception. But inſipid minds find in them entertainment congenial to their nature. And, indeed, the futility of the modern Novel almoſt precludes its power of cauſing any other miſchief, than the conſumption of time that might be more uſefully employed.

If, however, Novels are to be prohibited, in what, it will be aſked, can the young mind employ itſelf during the hours of neceſſary leiſure? To this it may be anſwered, that when the ſweetened poiſon is removed, plain and wholeſome food will always be reliſhed. The growing mind will crave nouriſhment, and will gladly ſeek it in true hiſtories, written in a pleaſing and eaſy ſtyle, on purpoſe for its uſe. Voyages and travels, when not obſcured by ſcientific obſervations, are always delightful to youthful curioſity. From intereſting narratives, like thoſe of Telemachus, and Robinſon Cruſoe, a mind not vitiated by a taſte for licentious Novels will derive a very ſenſible pleaſure. Let the boy's library conſiſt of ſuch books as Rollin's Hiſtory, Plutarch's Lives, and the Spectators; and, together with the improvement of his morals and underſtanding, which he muſt derive from reading them, he will have it in his power to ſpend his vacant time in ſuch mental amuſements as are truly and permanently delightful.

No. XV. ON SIMPLICITY OF STYLE IN PROSAIC COMPOSITION.

FOOD that gives the livelieſt pleaſure on the firſt taſte, frequently diſguſts on repetition; and thoſe things which pleaſe the palate without ſatiety, are ſuch as agitate but moderately, and perhaps originally cauſed a diſagreeable ſenſation. Mental food is alſo found by experience to nouriſh moſt, and delight the longeſt, when it is not luſciouſly ſweet. Profuſe ornament and unneceſſary graces, though they may tranſport the reader on a firſt peruſal, commonly occaſion a kind of intellectual ſurfeit, which prevents a ſecond.

Immoderate embelliſhment is the mark of a puerile taſte, of a weak judgment, and a little genius. It conveys the idea of too great a labour to pleaſe; an idea, which excludes the appearance of eaſe, without which it is difficult to effect the purpoſe of pleaſing. If the reader enters into the author's ſpirit, he finds his emotions too rapidly excited to be conſiſtent with pleaſurable feelings. Works acknowledged to be written with true taſte, are found for the moſt part to raiſe gentle emotions; and, when it is neceſſary to call up the more violent, the effect is improved from the rarity of the attempt. There is a certain equable flow of ſpirits, which keeps the mind in a tone for the admiſſion of durable pleaſure; but which, when hurried or exalted beyond its natural ſtate, terminates in diſguſt.

There are ſeveral books very popular in the preſent age, among the youthful and the inexperienced, which have a ſweetneſs that palls on the taſte, and a grandeur that ſwells to a bloated turgidity. Such are the writings of ſome modern Germans. The Death of Abel is generally read, and preferred by many to all the productions of Greece, Rome, and England. The ſucceſs of this work has given riſe to others on the ſame plan, inferior to this in its real merits, and labouring under the ſame fault of redundant decoration. What

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others may feel, I know not; but I would no more be obliged to read the works of Geſner repeatedly, than to make a frequent meal on the honey-comb.

The Meditations of Hervey, and many books of devotion, are written in that rhapſodic ſtyle, which wearies by its conſtant efforts to elevate the mind to extacy. They have, it is true, an uſeful effect on the rude and uncultivated, who are ſeldom penetrated but by forcible impreſſions; but the pleaſure they give is not ſufficiently elegant and refined to attach the more poliſhed reader.

Poetical proſe, as all ſuch writings may be called, ſeems indeed by no means correſpondent to claſſical ideas of beauty. There is no model of it among writers in the golden ages, and it has ſeldom been attempted by the firſt rank of moderns. Fenelon indeed ſucceeded in it, but he richly intermixed the beautiful flowers originally culled by Homer and Virgil. Genius like his, aſſiſted by claſſical learning, may give a grace to compoſitions formed on plans not quite conformable to the moſt approved taſte.

Many modern ſermons, while their authors aimed at ſublimity and a highly figurative eloquence, have become turgid and affected. The ſimple majeſty of the ſacred writings affords a proper model for ſacred oratory; and it muſt be owned, to the honour of the regular clergy, that they have commonly imitated it; and that the enthuſiaſtic and pompous harangue has uſually been the production of thoſe who have renounced reaſon in matters of taſte as well as of religion. Addreſſed to the meaneſt capacities in the loweſt orders, it may have produced a deſirable effect in compelling their attention, and in warming their inflammable paſſions. But, it is to be feared, its effect was but temporary, and it is certain that it can never poſſeſs a place among the elegant works of literature.

It is agreeable to the mind to be occaſionally rouſed by a powerful ſtroke; but it ſuffers a kind of ſmart, from a continual repetition of the blow. It is merely teazed and wearied by the feeble yet uninterrupted attacks of the unſkilful writer, who miſtakes the itch of ſcribbling for the impulſe of genius.

The Bible, the Iliad, and Shakeſpear's works, are allowed to be the ſublimeſt books that the world can exhibit. They are alſo truly ſimple; and the reader is the more affected by their indiſputable ſublimity, becauſe his attention is not wearied by ineffectual attempts at it. He who is acquainted with Longinus will remember, that the inſtances adduced by that great pattern of the excellence he deſcribes, are not remarkable for a glaring or a pompous ſtyle, but derive their claim to ſublimity from a noble energy of thought, modeſtly ſet off by a proper expreſſion.

No author has been more univerſally approved than Xenophon. Yet his writings diſplay no appearance of ſplendor or majeſty; nothing elevated or adorned with figures; no affectation of ſuperfluous ornament. His merit is an unaffected ſweetneſs, which no affectation can obtain. The graces ſeem to have conſpired to form the becomnig texture of his compoſition. And yet, perhaps, a common reader would neglect him, becauſe the eaſy and natural air of his narrative rouſes no violent emotion. More refined underſtandings peruſe him with delight; and Cicero has recorded that Scipio, when once he had opened the books of Xenophon, would with difficulty be prevailed with to cloſe them. His ſtyle, ſays the ſame great orator and critic, is ſweeter than honey, and the muſes themſelves ſeem to have ſpoken from his mouth.

Julius Cæſar is thought to have reſembled him in his ſtyle, as he did in the circumſtance of profeſſion. He has nothing florid or grand, but, like a gentle river, flows on with a ſurface unruffled. A wonderful inſtance of moderation, to have recounted his own achievements with accuracy, yet without being, for a moment, betrayed into an unbecoming pomp either of diction or repreſentation. Yet with all the graceſulneſs of modeſty and ſimplicity, he has an air of grandeur that commands reſpect. In compariſon with this, oſtentatious ornament would have been contemptible deformity.

Cicero, who underſtood and valued the ſimplicity of Xenophon, was, however, himſelf ſometimes guilty of its violation. He adopted the Aſiatic manner in ſome

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of his orations, and they are ſometimes more verboſe, diffuſe, and affected, than an Attic taſte can patiently endure. But it is a kind of ſacrilege, as well as preſumption, to detract from the deſerved glory of a man, who in his life and writings advanced human nature to high perfection.

The French nation is an affected nation; but many of their authors have written with remarkable ſimplicity. Fontaine, among others, is acknowledged to have equalled, in this beauty, the ancient models. But they have writers of the other kind, and I muſt own, I never could admire many of their boaſted orators. Even their Boſſuet and their Bourdaloue are not adapted to the taſte of an Engliſh or an Attic audience.

Simplicity is not in general the diſtinguiſhing beauty of Engliſh writers. Their ſpirit and ſolemnity of diſpoſition have ſometimes given their writings an ill-placed pomp and magnificence. But the works of an Addiſon and a Sterne, and the reception they have met with, will vindicate the nation from the charge of wanting taſte for ſimple beauty. The ancients have been much imitated in England; and where this is the caſe, a taſte for ſimplicity will ſometimes get the better of prevailing Gothiciſm. The German manner, it is hoped, will never ſupplant the Attic.

To write in a plain ſtyle appears eaſy in theory; but how few in compariſon have avoided the fault of unneceſſary and falſe ornament! The greater part ſeem to have miſtaken unwieldly corpulence for robuſt vigour, and to have deſpiſed the temperate habit of ſound health as meagreneſs. The taſte for finery is more general than for ſymmetrical beauty and chaſte elegance; and many, like Nero, would not be content till they ſhould have ſpoiled, by gilding it, the ſtatue of a Lyſippus.

No. XVI. ON THE PREVALENCE OF RELIGIOUS SCEPTICISM.

OF all the methods which the vanity of man has deviſed with a view to acquire diſtinction, there is none eaſier than that of profeſſing a diſbelief of the eſtabliſhed religion. That which ſhocks the feelings of thoſe with whom we converſe, cannot fail of attracting notice; and, as the vain are uſually confident, they utter their doubts with ſuch an oracular and deciſive air, as induces the ſimple to think them profoundly wiſe. Audacity, without ingenuity, will draw the eyes of ſpectators, and this will ſufficiently anſwer the purpoſe of the greater part of profeſſed unbelievers. One might be diverted, if one were not hurt, by ſeeing a circle of ſilly admirers gaping and fixing their eyes on ſome half learned and impudent prater, who throws out an oblique inſinuation againſt the Bible, the clergy, or the ſacrament. Theſe are fertile topics of wit and ingenuity; but it might mortify the vanity of ſome very vain writers and talkers, if they would recollect, what is undoubtedly true, that it is a ſpecies of wit and ingenuity, which not only the vileſt, but the moſt ſtupid and illiterate of mankind, have diſplayed in all its poſſible perfection.

There is indeed no doubt, but that vanity is one of the principal cauſes of infidelity. It muſt be the ſole cauſe of communicating it to others by writing or converſation. For let us ſuppoſe the caſe of a very humane, judicious, and learned man, entertaining doubts of the truth of Chriſtianity: if he cannot clear his doubts by examination, he will yet recollect that doubts are no certainties; and, before he endeavours to propagate his doubts, he will aſk himſelf theſe queſtions: Am I quite convinced, that what I doubt of cannot poſſibly be true? If I am convinced of it, am I ſure, that the publication of my opinions will not do more harm than good? Is not the diſturbing of any long-eſtabliſhed

eſtabliſhed civil conſtitution attended with confuſion, rebellion, ruin, and bloodſhed? And are not the majority of men more ſtrongly attached to the religion than the government of their forefathers? Will it ſerve any country to introduce diſcontent of any ſpecies? May not thoſe innovations in religion, which diſcontent may introduce, lead to all the evils which are cauſed by frenzy and fanaticiſm? Granting that I were able to make a party formidable enough to cruſh oppoſition and to exterminate Chriſtianity, ſtill am I certain I am acting like a good member of ſociety? For is not this ſyſtem, whether well or ill founded, friendly to ſociety? I muſt confeſs it; its greateſt enemies have acknowledged it, from the firſt oppoſer to the ſubtle hiſtorian, who, after having vented his venom in a ſubtle attack, is yet at laſt obliged, by the force of truth, to confeſs, that it contains a pure, benevolent, and univerſal ſyſtem of ethics, adapted to every duty, and every condition of life. What motive then can induce me to divulge my doubts of its authenticity? Not the good of mankind; for it is already allowed by unbelievers, that the good of mankind is intereſted in the belief of its divine original. Is it for my own good, and with a view to be convinced? I will not deceive myſelf: my motive, I ſuſpect, is of another kind; for do I read thoſe books, which have been already written, to ſatisfy ſimilar doubts? Nothing but the vanity of appearing to be wiſer than my credulous neighbours can induce me to interrupt the happineſs of their undoubting belief. But vanity of this ſort, which tends to diſturb ſociety, to injure the national morals, and to rob many thouſand individuals of a ſource of ſweet and ſolid comfort, is extreme wickedneſs, even according to the dictates of the religion of nature. I ſhall act the part of a good citizen and a good man, by conforming to a ſyſtem whoſe beneficial influence I feel and confeſs; and by endeavouring to acquire a belief in that which has, for ſo many centuries been eſtabliſhed, and which promiſes to ſooth me in diſtreſs with the ſweeteſt conſolations, and to brighten the diſmal hour of death, by the hope of a more glorious and happy ſtate of exiſtence. At

all events, I shall have the satisfaction of having commanded myself so far, as not to have run the hazard of endangering the welfare of my fellow-creatures, either here or hereafter, by indulging a degree of vanity, which, in a creature so weak and so short-lived as myself, is a folly very inconsistent with the superior wisdom which I should arrogate.

I will venture to repeat, that all writers against Christianity, whether they introduce their remarks by sly insinuation, or in the form of a history, or whether they openly avow their design in their title-page, however they may affect even the extremes of humanity, benevolence, honour, philosophy, and enlargement of mind, are actuated by vanity and wickedness. Their motives are as mean, selfish, narrow, and in every respect unjustifiable, as the tendency of their writings is mischievous. Their malice is often impotent, through the foolish sophistry of their arguments; but, if ever it is successful, it is highly injurious: and indeed, considering their motives, and the probable consequences of their endeavours, the infidel writer is a greater enemy to society, and consequently guiltier, according to all the principles of social union, than the thief or the traitor. Persecution would, however, only promote his cause, and his proper punishment is contempt.

It is certainly no derogation from the character of a man of sense to conform, even while he is so unfortunate as to doubt their truth, to the opinions of his country. His conformity will probably lead him to a train of actions and of thought, which, in due time, will induce him to believe. But, if that should not happen, yet he will act, as very wise and very great men have acted, in paying a respectful deference to the avowed conviction of others. The most intelligent and powerful men of ancient Rome, not only appeared to believe a very absurd and hurtful system, but assisted in all its ceremonies as priests. Even Socrates, who evidently appears to have entertained some notions adequate to the dignity of the one great and supreme Being, yet thought it was a duty which he owed to his country, so far to conform to the wretched establishment,

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as to order, in his dying words, a sacrifice to Æsculapius. This conformity ought not to be confounded with hypocrisy. If it is carried to extremes, or zealously affected, it certainly is very blameable and contemptible deceit; but while it keeps within the bounds of reason and moderation, it ought to be called a decent deference to the opinions of the majority, arising from humility, and a desire to maintain the tranquility of the state, and to continue an innocent and useful system, which has and will always greatly contribute to lessen the quantity and degree of moral and of natural evil.

The easiest, after all, or at least the most effectual method of appearing in any character is really, to be what we wish to appear. But belief is not in our power, and how can we believe what appears to us incredible? Certainly you cannot, while it appears incredible. But let me ask you, whether you have taken any pains to believe, or have at once and at a glance persuaded yourself, that the Christian religion is totally false? I am of opinion, that a great number of sceptical writers never gave themselves the trouble to read those scriptures, which they so warmly oppose. They hear objections, they read objections, and they find that men of reputed wit and ingenuity are often the persons from whom the objections originate. They would be reputed men of wit and ingenuity, and therefore they eagerly adopt the language and sentiments of the order. Perhaps the vanity and pride of this class of men will render all attempts to convince them abortive; but to modest doubters, and those whose good sense and good dispositions lead them to wish to adopt the religion of their country it may not be useless to suggest advice, with a view to facilitate their conviction.

I boldly say, then, that the chief thing required is to free themselves from the pride of human reason. Humility (and surely our blindness and imperfections, are sufficient to render us humble, if we would be reasonable), humility will open our hearts, and belief will find admission. Sincere endeavours, seconded by prayers, will never fail to help our unbelief. But,

alas! a fine, gay, spirited, liberal, and enlarged modern philosopher would be ashamed to be found on his knees, or with a Testament upon him. There is scarcely any vicious act, or any vicious book, which would put him so much to the blush.

A modest well-meaning man might, however, I should think, reason himself into a belief somewhat in this manner. "I find myself placed in a world "abounding with evil and misery. Under the pressure "of it, I feel my heart inclining, like the needle to "the north, by its natural tendency, to the Deity for "support. Man, of all animals, is the only one who "has the sense of religion. I look round to discover "to what object, and in what manner, that part of "my fellow-creatures, who live in the same society "with myself, pay their adoration. I find a system "of religion already established, and which has been "established, in the most enlightened countries of the "earth, near two thousand years. I resolve to ex-"amine it. It claims that respect, at least, from its "antiquity and universality. Many difficulties appear "on the first inspection. My reason is often startled, "and my belief wavers. But I will not yet give up "a point of so serious importance, without further "and closer attention to it. I reflect, that two thou-"sand years is a vast space in the age of the world. "How many myriads of men like myself have lived "and died in the faith during that time! And were "all of them fools or hypocrites? It could not have "been. Can the understanding of a poor individual "just come into the world, and hardly knowing where "he is, comprehend on intuition an object of such "magnitude, and make the mighty discovery, which "has escaped millions of the wisest and most learned "of mortals? Or, supposing that they all perceived "the deception, am I then at last the only honest "man? I am ashamed to avow such an idea to myself. "But yet, if I reject what they received, surely I "avow it in the more expressive language of my con-"duct. Pride is the foundation of my scepticism. "Humility must form the basis of my belief. I will "check my own presumption, and reject the cavils of

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" vain and foolish philosophy. Shall a poor weak " creature, who comes up like a flower, and is cut " down, who fleeth as a shadow, and never continueth " in one stay, presume to pronounce decisively in that " little period, in which he has scarcely time to look " about him before he dies, against a system, which " has strong internal and external evidence of divine " original, which is most useful and comfortable, and " which has been thus admitted during almost twenty " centuries? No, it is the first wisdom to be humble. " Humility will be followed by grace, and grace by " faith, and faith by salvation. It plainly appears, " that I can lose nothing by belief, but some of those " excessive and irregular enjoyments, which would de- " stroy my health and life; but I may possibly gain a " glory and a happiness, which shall continue to all " eternity."

No. XVII. FAMILY UNHAPPINESS THE FREQUENT CAUSE OF IMMORAL CONDUCT.

AFTER all our complaints of the uncertainty of human affairs, it is undoubtedly true, that more misery is produced among us by the irregularities of our tempers, than by real misfortunes.

And it happens unfortunately, that these irregularities of the temper are most apt to display themselves at our fire-sides, where every thing ought to be tranquil and serene. But the truth is, we are awed by the presence of strangers, and are afraid of appearing weak or ill-natured when we get out into the world, and so very heroically reserve all our ill-humour for our wives, children, and servants, We are meek where we might meet with opposition, but feel ourselves undauntedly bold where we are sure of no effectual resistance.

The perversion of the best things converts them to the worst. Home is certainly well adapted to repose and solid enjoyment. Among parents and brothers, and all the tender charities of private life, the gentler

affections, the operations of which are always attended with feelings purely and permanently pleaſurable, find ample ſcope for exertion. The experienced have often declared, after wearying themſelves in purſuing phantoms, that they have found a ſubſtantial happineſs in the domeſtic circle. Hither they have returned from their wild excurſions in the regions of diſſipation; as the bird, after fluttering in the air, deſcends into her neſt, to partake and to increaſe its genial warmth with her mate and with her young ones.

Such and ſo ſweet are the comforts of home, when it is not perverted by the folly and weakneſs of man. Indifference, and a careleſſneſs about pleaſing thoſe whom it is our beſt intereſt to pleaſe, often render it a ſcene of dulneſs and inſipidity. Happy if this were the whole of the evil. But the tranſition from the negative ſtate of not being pleaſed, to poſitive ill-humour, is almoſt unavoidable. Fretfulneſs and peeviſhneſs ariſe, as nettles vegetate, ſpontaneouſly, where no ſalutary plants are cultivated. One unkind expreſſion infallibly generates many others. Trifles light as air are able to kindle the blaze of contention. By frequent conflicts and unreſerved familiarity, all that mutual reſpect which is neceſſary to preſerve love, even in the moſt intimate connections, is entirely loſt, and the faint affection which remains is too feeble to be felt amid the furious operation of the hateful paſſions. Farewel peace and tranquillity, and cheerful converſe, and all the boaſted comforts of the family circle. The neſt which ſhould preſerve a perpetual warmth by the conſtancy of paternal and conjugal affection, is rendered cold and joyleſs. In the place of the ſoft down which ſhould cover it, are ſubſtituted thorns and briars. The waters of ſtrife, to make uſe of the beautiful alluſion of Scripture, ruſh in with impetuous violence, and ruffle and diſcolour that ſtream, which, in its natural and undiſturbed current, devolves its waters all ſmooth and limpid.

But it is not neceſſary to expatiate on the miſery of family diſſenſion. I mean more particularly to ſuggeſt, that family diſſenſion, beſides all its own immediate evils, is the fruitful parent of moral miſconduct.

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When the several parts which compose a family find themselves uneasy in that home which is naturally the seat of mutual enjoyment, they are led from the straight road, to pursue their happiness through a devious wild. The son, arrived at years of maturity, who is treated harshly at home, will seldom spend his evenings at the fire-side. If he lives in the metropolis, he will fly for refuge to the places of public diversion. There it is very probable, some unhappy connection will be formed, which cannot be continued without a plentiful supply of money. Money, it is probable, cannot be procured honestly but from the parent; but money must be, at all events, procured. What then remains, but to take those methods which sharpers have invented, and which, sooner or later, lead to their proper punishments, pain, and shame, and death?

But though the consequences are not always such as the operation of human laws produces, yet they are always terrible, and destructive of happiness. Misery is indeed the necessary result of all deviation from virtue; but early debauchery, early disease, early profligacy of all kinds, are peculiarly fruitful of wretchedness; as they sow the seeds of misery in the spring of life, when all that is sown strikes deep root, and buds, and blossoms, and brings forth fruit an hundred fold.

In the disagreements between children and parents, it is certain that the children are usually most in fault. Their violent passions and defective experience render them disobedient and undutiful. Their love of pleasure operates so violently, as often to destroy the force of filial affection. A parent is stung to the heart by the ingratitude of a child. He checks his precipitancy, and perhaps with too little command of temper; for who indeed can always hold the reins? Asperity produces asperity. But the child was the aggressor, and therefore deserves a great part of the misery which ensues. It is, however, certain, that the parent is often imprudent, as well as the child undutiful. He should endeavour to render home agreeable by gentleness and reasonable indulgence: for man at every age seeks to be pleased, but more particularly at the juvenile age. He should indeed maintain his authority; but it should be

be like the mild dominion of a limited monarch, not the iron rule of a tyrant. If home is rendered pleasing, it will not long be deserted. The prodigal will soon return when his father's house is always ready to receive him with joy.

What is said of the consequences of domestic disunion to sons, is equally to be applied to daughters. Indeed, as the misconduct of daughters is more fatal to family peace, though not more heinous in a moral view, particular care should be taken to render them attached to the comforts of the family circle. When their home is disagreeable, they will be ready to make any exchange; and will often lose their characters, virtue, and happiness, in the pursuit of it. Indeed the female character and happiness are so easily injured, that no solicitude can be too great in their preservation. But prudence is necessary in every good cause, as well as zeal; and it is found by experience, that the gentlest method of government, if it is limited and directed by good sense is the best. It ought indeed to be steady, but not rigid: and every pleasure which is innocent in itself and in its consequences, ought to be admitted, with a view to render less disagreeable that unwinking vigilance which a delicate and sensible father will judge necessary in the care of daughters.

To what wickedness, as well as wretchedness, matrimonial disagreements lead, every day's history will clearly inform us. When the husband is driven from his home by a termagant, he will seek enjoyment, which is denied him at his own home, in the haunts of vice, and in the riots of intemperance: nor can female corruption be wondered at, though it must be greatly pitied and regretted, when in the heart which love and friendship should warm, hatred is found to rankle. Conjugal infelicity not only renders life most uncomfortable, but leads to a desperate dissoluteness and carelessness in life and manners, which terminates in ruin of health, peace, and fortune. If we may form a judgment from the divorces and separations which happen in the gay world, we may conclude, that the present manners are highly unfavourable to conjugal felicity. And we see, consistently with my theory, that the

the consequence of those domestic disagreements is the prevalence of vice in a very predominant degree, as well as of misery.

But it avails little to point out evils without recommending a remedy. One of the first rules which suggests itself is, that families should endeavour, by often and seriously reflecting on the subject, to convince themselves, that not only the enjoyment, but the virtue of every individual, greatly depends on union. When they are convinced of this, they will endeavour to promote it; and it fortunately happens, that the very wish and attempt of every individual in the family must infallibly secure success. It may indeed be difficult to restrain the occasional sallies of temper; but where there is, in the more dispassionate moments, a settled desire to preserve union, the transient violence of passion will not often produce a lasting rupture.

It is another most excellent rule, to avoid *a gross familiarity*, even where the connection is most intimate. The human heart is so constituted as to love respect. It would indeed be unnatural in very intimate friends to behave to each other with stiffness; but there is a delicacy of manner, and a flattering deference, which tends to preserve that degree of esteem which is necessary to support affection, and which is lost in contempt when a too great familiarity is allowed. An habitual politeness of manners will prevent even indifference from degenerating to hatred. It will refine, exalt, and perpetuate affection.

But the best and most efficacious rule is, that we should not think our moral and religious duties are only to be practised in public, and in the sight of those from whose applause we expect the gratification of our vanity, ambition, or avarice; but that we should be equally attentive to our behaviour among those who can only repay us by reciprocal love. We must shew the sincerity of our principles and professions by acting consistently with them, not only in the senate, in the field, in the pulpit, at the bar, or any other public assembly, but at the *fire-side*.

No. XVIII. HINTS TO YOUNG MEN WHO ARE DESIGNED FOR ORDERS.

IT is no reproach to the church to ſay, that it is ſupplied with miniſters by the emoluments it affords. Men muſt be ſupported; and if the proſpect of ſupport is one principal motive in impelling them to enter on the clerical office, it is a natural, a reaſonable motive, and in no reſpect diſgraceful. A ſon, it is true, is deſtined to the church becauſe his father or friend is the patron of a living; or he is placed at a free-ſchool, and is carried on to college with a view to a ſcholarſhip; or he fixes on the profeſſion himſelf from a love of letters and tranquillity, and from the hope of gaining a quiet and eaſy, though ſmall ſtipend, in a liberal and an uſeful employment. There is nothing in all this unreaſonable; and though hypocriſy and fanaticiſm may diſclaim ſuch motives, yet, if he who is actuated by them, as the greater part certainly are, prepares himſelf duly for entrance on the office, and diſcharges its duties conſcientiouſly when he is in it, he is a worthy and valuable clergyman, and a better man than they who revile him.

Whichever of the above cauſes may have inclined a young man to devote himſelf to the church, I will ſuppoſe him juſt diſmiſſed from his ſchool, and will ſubmit to his conſideration a few remarks, which, I hope, will be uſeful. With reſpect to enthuſiaſts, I will not preſume to direct them. They, indeed, are guided by a ſuperior illumination, to which I cannot confidently pretend.

To facilitate the tenure of ſome preferments, and to ſatisfy the prejudices of the world, it will be neceſſary to take academical degrees. This cannot reputably be done without becoming a member of an Engliſh univerſity. If the finances of the ſtudent are inadequate to his ſupport, he will probably be tempted to reſide in one of them, for the ſake of the emoluments of ſcholarſhips, fellowſhips, or exhibitions. If, indeed, a ſtricter diſcipline,

diſcipline, and a few regulations in the exerciſes, ſhould take place, he will do right to fix his reſidence in the venerable ſeats of learning, where every convenience for the purpoſes of ſtudy is liberally afforded.

But if neither the diſcipline nor the ſtatutes are altered, I would adviſe him, if he were my own child, barely to keep two terms a-year for ſeveral years, which may be done in the ſpace of five or ſix weeks only ſpent for four or five years in the univerſities, ſo as to derive as good a right, by the ſtatutes, as any other members, to the honours beſtowed by an univerſity convocation. In Oxford, for inſtance, three weeks ſpent at Eaſter, and a fortnight in Act term, are the ſeaſons I recommend. And the reſidence during this ſhort time, for five or ſix years, will be ſufficient for the purpoſe. This excurſion may furniſh an agreeable variety, and the time may be well ſpent in examining the public libraries, and in attending the public lecturers, who contrive to circumſcribe their courſes within the limits of the few weeks required by the ſtatutes to keep a term. With reſpect to a voluntary reſidence at either univerſity during ſix or eight months at a time, though certainly right if a reformation ſhould take place, I conſider it, in their preſent ſtate, as dangerous, expenſive, and attended with no advantage great enough to compenſate the diſadvantage, and which may not be enjoyed abundantly better in the family of a worthy and learned clergyman in a country village. By all means let the long intervals be employed in ſtudy, for which the ſilence of a village retreat, provided a ſufficient number of books are to be procured, is far better accommodated than the ſociety of noiſy young men, who are ſuffered to do as they pleaſe by night and by day; who are above controul; and who cauſe the college to reſemble the tavern and the brothel. I ſeriouſly declare, I have no cauſe to expreſs myſelf with reſentment on the ſubject of the univerſities. I ſay what I think, and I ſay it becauſe it would ill become me to conceal any thing in the knowledge of which ingenuous youth is greatly intereſted.

If a young man is fortunate enough to find a worthy clergyman who will be his companion and inſtructor from

from nineteen to twenty-three, he will direct the ſtudies and the conduct. But as I know that all will not be able to find ſuch an one, and that the greater part cannot, from the ſlenderneſs of their fortune, make ſuch a compenſation as would be required by him, when found, I ſhall proceed to offer my advice.

At the age of one-and-twenty, it will be proper to begin the ſtudies preparatory to ordination. If it is poſſible, a young man of ſimilar views and intentions ſhould be procured as an aſſociate. I ſay then, that without any tutor, by the direction of books, they may thus, with due application, make at leaſt as great an improvement in this retreat, as they could in any univerſity. In theſe circumſtances, they would be leſs expoſed to diſſipation; and, for that reaſon among others, they would be more attached to ſtudy, and would ſucceed in it better.

Such would be my plan till the univerſities ſhould be reformed. But ſince many reaſons will concur to induce parents to ſend their ſons to the univerſities as uſual, ſuch as the expectation of various pecuniary advantages, the opportunities of forming connections, the fear of ſingularity, and indeed the difficulty of deviating from the accuſtomed path, I will ſuppoſe a ſtudent juſt matriculated, and will ſubmit to his opinion the following ſuggeſtions.

He is ſent to college to improve his mind and morals, to become a good ſcholar, and a good man; not a man of pleaſure, nor a man of faſhion. Let him, then, reſolve to purſue his ſtudies indefatigably, and pray God Almighty to preſerve his innocence, and to be a guardian to him, now he is removed from the foſtering wing of an affectionate parent. Let him beware of being overcome by ridicule, by which he will certainly be attacked. Let him be ſteady in his principles, and ſpirited in his actions; exhibiting that vivacity and reſolution in his good purpoſes which others do in their bad ones. Let him recollect, that he is preparing for a ſacred office, and make his conduct conſiſtent with his views. But, with all his virtues and all his prudence, let him avoid the appearance of unneceſſary ſtiffneſs, of hypocriſy, or of more ſingularity than

than is required for the preservation of his principles. Let him also most carefully avoid a censorious disposition. It is his business to advance his own good qualities to all attainable perfection; not to be morose, or calumnious on the defects and faults of others. He will see, pity, and avoid them; but he will leave the office of correction to those who ought to assume it.

The foolish exercises performed in the public schools are too ridiculous to deserve a serious censure: but as his degree may be denied him, if he fails in any particular of this formal trifling, he must pay to them, and to the studies which are connected with them, so much attention, and no more, as will qualify him to perform them with facility and confidence. The classics in general, the Hebrew language, and the books introductory to divinity, will claim all his serious application.

The preparatory improvements should not be confined to that moderate degree of excellence which may be required in a chaplain's examination. They who aim only at passing an examination, usually relinquish their studies when the examination is past. With a good character, moderate attainments, and those recommendatory testimonies which are easily procured, there is no danger of rejection. But he who deserves to succeed will not be satisfied without making a solid improvement in useful theology.

A young clergyman, if he wishes to be esteemed by his parishioners, and to promote their welfare, must take particular care, on first entering on his cure, that he makes favourable impressions on the subject of his morals. However young, he must remember, that, by assuming the office of a public and religious instructor, he has assumed a grave character. If he is not grave, he may indeed be pardoned, or be pitied; but he will not be valued. I mean not that he should be austere, nor puritanical; but that he should avoid even the appearance of that disgustful levity of manners, and excessive profligacy, which has disgraced the younger clergy of the times. That real levity and real profligacy are to be avoided, I need not inform him; but at the same time I am sorry to be obliged to confess, that the serious part of mankind have long had just reason

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to express their abhorrence at the frequent occurrence of the *professed clerical libertine*. He will avoid evil, and the appearance of evil. If he cannot bring his mind to sacrifice youthful follies to the dignity of his profession, he should not engage in it. The public have long remarked with indignation, that some of the most distinguished coxcombs, drunkards, debauchees, and gamesters, who figure at the watering-places, and all public places of resort, are young men of the sacerdotal order.

They plead that they are young, and youth must excuse the follies that result from the too ardent love of pleasure. If they are young, they thought themselves old enough to assume the office of instructors of mankind; and to warn their fellow-creatures to avoid those very irregularities which they not only practise, but in which they glory, as marks of spirit.

The clergyman who would be respected, and every clergyman would be respected if he would be useful, must preserve a decency of dress.

He must be affable; but his affability must be tempered with reserve.

He must be regular in the performance of parochial duty, and pay at least as much attention to the poor as to the rich.

He must read prayers, and preach, with fervency and earnestness; not as if he considered his business as a job, by which he is to earn a certain pay, or as if he did not believe what he uttered. His eloquence will be forcible, but not ranting; pathetic, but not whining.

He must not be covetous, nor very rigid in exacting of the poor his just dues.

He must be benevolent and beneficent in an exemplary degree; winning men by persuasion, forgiving injuries, and teaching more forcibly by his life than his discourses.

He must not be a *preferment-hunter*; for we cannot esteem him, who, while he talks of crowns of glory, appears to fix his own heart on a stall or a mitre.

No. XIX. HINTS TO YOUNG MEN WHO ARE DESIGNED FOR A MILITARY OR NAVAL LIFE.

THE exigencies of the ſtate have called for an increaſe of the military orders, and it muſt be owned that our Britiſh youth has not been ſlow to obey the ſummons; for there is ſcarcely a town or village in the kingdom where you will not meet, as you paſs along, cockades, epaulettes, and ſcarlet coats, accompanied with fierce looks and ſtruts *à la militaire.* The military ſpirit is indeed ſo widely diffuſed, that there is reaſon to believe the nation will ſhortly become a nation of warriors. But as the military ſpirit is rather adverſe to the gentle arts of peace, and as the young heroes are apt to lay down their books as ſoon as they take up their arms, I will ſuggeſt to them a few hints, which may probably prevent their heroiſm from degenerating to brutality. I would not wiſh them to imagine, that the moment they have put their hats on ſideways, and dreſſed themſelves at their toilettes in complete uniform, they are ſoldiers. They may be pretty figures, and, doubtleſs, will be able to do great execution at an aſſembly; but it does not follow that they will be equally ſucceſsful on the plains of Saratoga.

Many who enter on the profeſſion while they are ſtripplings, are apt to ſuppoſe, that a ſword, a cockade, and a ſhoulder-knot, conſtitute them complete gentlemen. Theſe, however, will not conſtitute them men, and much leſs gentlemen: for an ignorant, rude, and mean mind under a red coat, is no leſs viſible, and more contemptible, than if it appeared under rags, and in the dreſs of a mechanic.

Almoſt all the profeſſions have ſome characteriſtic manners, which the profeſſors adopt, with little examination, as neceſſary and as honourable diſtinctions. It happens unfortunately, that vulgarity, profligacy, libertiniſm, and infidelity, are thought by weaker minds

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almoſt as neceſſary a part of a ſoldier's uniform as his ſhoulder-knot. To heſitate at an oath, to decline intoxication, to profeſs a regard for religion, would be almoſt as ignominious as to refuſe a challenge. Inſolvency and diſeaſe, ſome of the greateſt misfortunes which can befal a human creature, are often thought to add a grace to the military man. He dreſſes, he drinks, he bluſters, he ſpends his money, he ruins his conſtitution and his peace; but the compenſation for all this is, that he is a favourite of the ladies; and really in this his ultimate object he often ſucceeds; for many of them are as weak as himſelf, and are ready to run wild at the ſight of a red coat. Age and uglineſs, diſeaſe and rottenneſs, are all loſt in the irreſiſtible charms of a piece of ſcarlet broad-cloth; and many a young man, who has been repulſed in a common dreſs, has been arrayed by his taylor for the battle, and gained a complete victory. The croſs-legged artiſt has often metamorphoſed a Therſites into an Adonis. But this ſilly attachment of the women tends immediately to increaſe that profligacy which has ever been the fertile ſource of female miſery: and now, when you can hardly turn without ſeeing a military man, the evil muſt neceſſarily be increaſed, and conſequently it is the more deſirable to adminiſter a remedy.

But here I will interrupt my remarks, to aſſure the reader, that the puerile vanity and ſtudied profligacy which I have deſcribed, is only to be found in thoſe who have been too early commiſſioned, and have been entered on the ſoldier's life deſtitute of the gentleman's education. There are indeed many ſuch; for parents, who have intereſt, are deſirous of entering their ſons early, that they may arrive at an exalted poſt in the prime of manhood. Hence it happens, that the time, which ſhould be employed in a virtuous courſe of literary diſcipline, is thrown away amidſt the diſſoluteneſs of a camp, or a barrack, or a ſhip's crew; and the poor youth, though he is lifted over the heads of veterans, and aſſumes all the haughty airs of a great man, poſſeſſes a mind only diſtinguiſhed from that of his drummer, or his boatſwain, by ſuperior inſolence. He has no taſte; his pleaſures are groſs; he is a diſtinguiſhed

guiſhed brute indeed; but his diſtinction conſiſts only in ſuperior brutality; his conduct is caprice, and his courage inſenſibility. He lives a life of miſery, varied only by the ſhort gleams of vicious and infamous indulgences. Of ſuch miſery as this it is ſurely friendly to attempt the prevention. If the preſent generation may not profit by the ſuggeſtions which I offer, the ſucceeding one may be reſcued from perdition. But, leſt what I am compelled to ſay of the uneducated and unprincipled part of the profeſſion ſhould be extended too far, I muſt add, that I am well convinced that a great part of the army conſiſts of men who have entered on the military profeſſion from the beſt motives, and have carried into the camp the accompliſhments of the ſchool.

To the other part, whoſe misfortune it has been to be engaged in an unſettled life, without inſtruction in any of the valuable parts of ſcience, without moral principles, or even the idea of religion, it may not be uſeleſs to addreſs a few admonitions.

Let them perſuade themſelves of the beauty, the value, and the pleaſures of a cultivated mind. Let them compare one of their profeſſion who poſſeſſes the graces of the underſtanding, with another of equal rank whoſe ideas are low, whoſe ſentiments are narrow and ſelfiſh, whoſe pleaſures are groſs, and who has no other method of employing his leiſure but in drunkenneſs and debauchery. The contraſt will exhibit the deformity which I am deſcribing in ſtriking colours. The one is reſpected and beloved; happy in himſelf, and the cauſe of happineſs in others: the other, though he is always purſuing pleaſure, never finds it pure and exalted; but ſpends a feveriſh being in vanity and vice, and precipitates that diſſolution at which all but himſelf have reaſon to rejoice.

Now the leiſure which this profeſſion frequently enjoys above all others, as it is often the cauſe of vice, ſo it affords a fine opportunity for making improvement. But how ſhall the uncultivated ſoldier begin? He was taken from his ſchool before he had laid any foundation on which he might build the fabric of learning. Where this is the caſe, we muſt not hope that he will be

quality which poſſeſſes a moſt powerful effect in ſtimulating to application. In truth, no time is loſt to the public by the obſervation of a Sabbath; for the loſs of a few hours is amply compenſated by the additional vigour and ſpirit which are given to human activity by the agreeable viciſſitude. A thouſand reaſons might be aſſigned for the obſervation of it, ſuppoſing it wanted any, ſuperadded to the ſanction of divine authority. Among others, the long duration of this eſtabliſhment is, in my opinion, an argument greatly in its favour; for human affairs, in a long courſe of years, ſettle, for the moſt part, like water, in their proper level and ſituation.

It may, then, be numbered among the follies of modern innovators, and pretenders to ſuperior enlargement of mind and freedom from prejudice, that they have endeavoured to deſtroy the ſanctity, and, in courſe, the eſſential purpoſes of this ſacred inſtitution. They have laboured to render it a day of public and pleaſureable diverſion; and, if they had ſucceeded, they would have made Sunday in no reſpect different from the other days of the week: for if one man was allowed to purſue pleaſure at the uſual public places, another, who felt the influence of avarice more than of the love of pleaſure, would juſtly have claimed a right to purſue his lucrative labour. And, indeed, it muſt be owned, that there would be far leſs harm in proſecuting the deſigns of honeſt induſtry, that in relaxing the nerves of the mind by a diſſolute purſuit of nominal pleaſures; of ſuch pleaſures as uſually terminate in pain, diſeaſe, and ruin. The national ſpirit and ſtrength muſt be impaired by national corruption. Feebleneſs of mind is the unavoidable effect of exceſſive diſſipation; but how ſhall the political machine perform its movements with efficacy, when the minds of the people, the ſprings of the whole, have loſt their elaſticity? If you were to prohibit honeſt labour, and allow public pleaſures, Sunday would become a day of uncontrouled debauchery and drunkenneſs. It would infallibly ſink the lower claſſes to that degenerate ſtate in which they appear in ſome neighbouring countries, and would conſequently facilitate the annihilation of civil liberty.

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The decent obſervation of Sunday is indeed to be urged by arguments of a nature greatly ſuperior to political reaſons: but a few political ones are here offered; becauſe, with the oppoſers of the obſervation of the Sabbath, political arguments are more likely to have weight than religious. They who hold the Bible ſo cheap as to have confuted, in their own minds, every thing it contains, without ever having looked into it, are often idolaters of *Magna Charta*. And though it might be in vain to urge, that Sunday ſhould be decently kept for the ſake of promoting the intereſts of the goſpel, it would probably be an inducement to pay it all due attention, if we could convince certain perſons that a decent regard to it promotes ſuch ſentiments and principles among the people as have a tendency to ſupport the Bill of Rights, and ſecure the Proteſtant ſucceſſion. Every thing which promotes virtue is ſalutary to the mind, conſidered only as a medicine; as a bracer, if I may ſo ſay, or a corroborative remedy. Now ſtrength and vigour of mind are abſolutely neceſſary, if we would conſtantly entertain an adequate idea of the bleſſings of liberty, and take effectual methods to defend it when it is infringed.

But, ſetting aſide both religious and political arguments, or allowing them all their force, ſtill it will be urged by great numbers, and thoſe too in the higher ſpheres of life, that all buſineſs being prohibited on Sundays, they are really at a loſs to ſpend their time. "Let us then," ſay they, "ſince we are forbidden to "work, let us play. Let us have public diverſions. "There can be no harm in a polite promenade. In-"deed" (they inſiſt) "if it were not for the prejudices of "the *canaille*, it would be right to permit more places "of public diverſion on Sundays than on other days; "obviouſly becauſe we have nothing elſe to do but to "attend them. But Engliſh prejudices are too "deeply rooted to be eradicated. On the continent, "the return of Sunday is delightful; but in our gloomy "iſland it is a blank in exiſtence, and ought to be "blotted out of the calendar."

The arguments indeed, ſuch as they are, were of late preſented in the beſt form, I preſume, which they will

admit, by one of those noble senators, who opposed the late laudable act for the suppression of some enormities which had been introduced as the pastime of the sabbath; and whose speech would condemn him to eternal infamy, if its extreme insignificancy did not reverse the sentence, and ensure it a friendly and speedy oblivion.

Such arguments are indeed attended with their own refutation; but it is certainly true, that some orders among us are distressed for methods of employing their time on a Sunday. I will therefore beg leave, from motives of compassion, to suggest some hints, which may contribute to relieve them from the very painful situation of not knowing how to pass away the lagging hours. Sunday is selected by them for travelling; and the high roads on a Sunday are crowded with coaches adorned with coronets. But to Christians there are other employments peculiar to the day, which will leave no part of it disengaged. If they are not Christians, their contempt of the sabbath is one of the least of their errors, and, before it can be removed, a belief must be produced; to attempt which does not fall within the limits or design of this paper.

But supposing them Christians, let us endeavour to provide amusement for them during the twelve hours in every seven days, in which the business of the world is precluded. If lords and dukes would condescend to go to their parish-church, they might find themselves well employed from ten o'clock till twelve. To the prayers they can have no reasonable objection; and, with respect to the sermon, though its diction or its sentiments may not be excellent, yet, in the present times, the want of merit is usually compensated by brevity. And the great man may comfort himself during its continuance with reflecting, that, though he is neither pleased or instructed by it, yet he himself is preaching in effect a most persuasive sermon by giving his attendance. His example will attract many auditors, and bad indeed must be the discourse from which the vulgar hearer cannot derive much advantage. If any charitable purpose is to be accomplished, and there never passes a Sunday, but in the metropolis many such

ſuch purpoſes are to be accompliſhed, the bare preſence of a man in high life will contribute greatly to the pecuniary collection. And, if a peer of the realm was as willing to give his preſence at a charity-ſermon as at a horſe-race, to contribute to the ſupport of orphans and widows, as to keep a ſtud and a pack of hounds, perhaps he would find himſelf no loſer even in the grand object of his life, the enjoyment of pleaſure.

The interval between the morning and evening ſervice may ſurely be ſpent in reading, or in improving converſation. The reſt of the day, even to eight o'clock, may be ſpent in the metropolis at church (if any one chuſes it), for evening lectures abound. And, though there is no obligation to attend at more than the eſtabliſhed times, yet no man can ſay there are no public places of reſort, when he can ſcarcely turn a corner without ſeeing a church-door open, and hearing a bell importunately inviting him to enter.

The little time which remains after the uſual religious duties of the day, may certainly be ſpent in ſuch a manner as to cauſe no tedium, even though Carliſle-houſe is ſhut, and the rigid laws forbid us to enter Vauxhall, Ranelagh, and the theatres. A cheerful walk amidſt rural ſcenes is capable of affording, in fine weather, a very ſenſible pleaſure. In all ſeaſons, at all hours, and in all weathers, converſation is capable of affording an exquiſite delight; and books, of improving, exalting, refining, and captivating the human mind. He who calls in queſtion the truth of this, muſt allow his hearers to call in queſtion his claim to rationality.

The ſubordinate claſſes, for I have hitherto been ſpeaking of the higher, ſeldom complain that they know not what to do on a Sunday. To them it is a joyful feſtival. They, for the moſt part, are conſtant attendants at church; and the decency of their habits and appearance, the cleanlineſs which they diſplay, the opportunity they enjoy of meeting their neighbours in the ſame regular and decent ſituation with themſelves, renders Sunday highly advantageous to them, excluſively of its religious advantages. They uſually fill up the intervals of divine ſervice with a rural walk,

and their little indulgences at the tea-houſes are highly proper and allowable. They are confined to ſedentary and laborious work during the week, and a walk in the freſh air is moſt conducive to their health, while it affords them a very lively pleaſure, ſuch a pleaſure indeed as we have all felt in Milton's famous deſcription of it. The common people are ſufficiently delighted with ſuch enjoyments, and would really be diſpleaſed with thoſe public diverſions which our travelled reformers have deſired to introduce.

Neither are they in want of diſputing ſocieties to fill up their time. There are pariſh-churches in abundance. After they have attended at them, it is far better that they ſhould walk in the air, than be pent up in a cloſe room and putrifying air, where their health muſt ſuffer more than even in the exerciſe of their handicraft trade or vocation. But that indeed is one of the leaſt of the evils which they muſt endure, were they allowed to attend at every turbulent aſſembly, which either the avaricious or the diſcontented may convene. Weak underſtandings are eaſily led aſtray by weak arguments. Their own morals and happineſs, and the welfare of the church and ſtate, are greatly intereſted in the ſuppreſſion of thoſe houſes, which were lately opened under the arrogant name of theological ſchools. The act which ſuppreſſed them reflects honour on the Britiſh ſenate. Such acts as this would indeed excite the zeal of the good and religious on the ſide of the legiſlature, and would rouſe, among thoſe whoſe actions muſt carry weight with them becauſe their characters are reſpected, ſuch a ſpirit and unanimity, as would enable the executive part of government to ſupport itſelf with honour and tranquillity at home, and act with irreſiſtible vigour abroad.

Why ſhould the preſent race, whether high or low, ſtand more in need of public diverſions on a Sunday than our foreſathers in the laſt and in the beginning of the preſent century? No good reaſon can be given. It may not indeed be improbable, that the true origin of this new created want is, that the greater part of the preſent race, from the defect of a religious education, or from ſubſequent diſſipation, which is found to obliterate

obliterate all ſerious ideas, have no reliſh for the proper and natural methods of ſpending their time on a Sunday, the performance of religious duties and the exertions of benevolence.

No. XXI. ON THE COMPLAINTS OF MEN OF LEARNING.

AN impartial obſerver will be obliged to confeſs, that if the real evils of men of genius and learning be no greater than thoſe of others, yet the ſenſe of them is commonly more acute. The ſame delicacy of feeling, which renders them particularly ſuſceptible of intellectual beauty, makes them feel more ſenſibly the common diſtreſſes of human life.

Men of genius and learning are, for the moſt part, in a ſtate of intenſe thought: while they who are engaged in leſs refined purſuits, are frequently in a ſtate of mental inſenſibility; and if happineſs is only in the mind, every little accident muſt diſturb his repoſe who is always in meditation. The ſtring which is conſtantly kept in a ſtate of tenſion will vibrate on the ſlighteſt impulſe.

The pleaſures of men of literature, are thoſe which ariſe from the contemplation of greatneſs, novelty, and beauty; pleaſures of the pureſt and moſt exalted nature. Perhaps, no ſtate is more truly happy than that of a man of genius, at the time he is cloſely engaged in ſurveying either of theſe three ſources of imaginative enjoyment; but the very purity and excellence of theſe pleaſure are ultimately the occaſion of miſery to their votaries. Our preſent condition will not permit merely mental gratifications to engroſs our whole care and attention; and when the mind reverts from its ideal bliſs to the occupations which its union with a body neceſſarily enjoins, the tranſition from ſupreme delight to inſipidity and vexation, becomes the occaſion of a degree of miſery more than proportionate to the degree of loſt happineſs.

Perfection

almoſt as neceſſary a part of a ſoldier's uniform as his ſhoulder-knot. To heſitate at an oath, to decline intoxication, to profeſs a regard for religion, would be almoſt as ignominious as to refuſe a challenge. Inſolvency and diſeaſe, ſome of the greateſt misfortunes which can befal a human creature, are often thought to add a grace to the military man. He dreſſes, he drinks, he bluſters, he ſpends his money, he ruins his conſtitution and his peace; but the compenſation for all this is, that he is a favourite of the ladies; and really in this his ultimate object he often ſucceeds; for many of them are as weak as himſelf, and are ready to run wild at the ſight of a red coat. Age and uglineſs, diſeaſe and rottenneſs, are all loſt in the irreſiſtible charms of a piece of ſcarlet broad-cloth; and many a young man, who has been repulſed in a common dreſs, has been arrayed by his taylor for the battle, and gained a complete victory. The croſs-legged artiſt has often metamorphoſed a Therſites into an Adonis. But this ſilly attachment of the women tends immediately to increaſe that profligacy which has ever been the fertile ſource of female miſery: and now, when you can hardly turn without ſeeing a military man, the evil muſt neceſſarily be increaſed, and conſequently it is the more deſirable to adminiſter a remedy.

But here I will interrupt my remarks, to aſſure the reader, that the puerile vanity and ſtudied profligacy which I have deſcribed, is only to be found in thoſe who have been too early commiſſioned, and have been entered on the ſoldier's life deſtitute of the gentleman's education. There are indeed many ſuch; for parents, who have intereſt, are deſirous of entering their ſons early, that they may arrive at an exalted poſt in the prime of manhood. Hence it happens, that the time, which ſhould be employed in a virtuous courſe of literary diſcipline, is thrown away amidſt the diſſoluteneſs of a camp, or a barrack, or a ſhip's crew; and the poor youth, though he is lifted over the heads of veterans, and aſſumes all the haughty airs of a great man, poſſeſſes a mind only diſtinguiſhed from that of his drummer, or his boatſwain, by ſuperior inſolence. He has no taſte; his pleaſures are groſs; he is a diſtinguiſhed

guiſhed brute indeed; but his diſtinction conſiſts only in ſuperior brutality; his conduct is caprice, and his courage inſenſibility. He lives a life of miſery, varied only by the ſhort gleams of vicious and infamous indulgences. Of ſuch miſery as this it is ſurely friendly to attempt the prevention. If the preſent generation may not profit by the ſuggeſtions which I offer, the ſucceeding one may be reſcued from perdition. But, leſt what I am compelled to ſay of the uneducated and unprincipled part of the profeſſion ſhould be extended too far, I muſt add, that I am well convinced that a great part of the army conſiſts of men who have entered on the military profeſſion from the beſt motives, and have carried into the camp the accompliſhments of the ſchool.

To the other part, whoſe misfortune it has been to be engaged in an unſettled life, without inſtruction in any of the valuable parts of ſcience, without moral principles, or even the idea of religion, it may not be uſeleſs to addreſs a few admonitions.

Let them perſuade themſelves of the beauty, the value, and the pleaſures of a cultivated mind. Let them compare one of their profeſſion who poſſeſſes the graces of the underſtanding, with another of equal rank whoſe ideas are low, whoſe ſentiments are narrow and ſelfiſh, whoſe pleaſures are groſs, and who has no other method of employing his leiſure but in drunkenneſs and debauchery. The contraſt will exhibit the deformity which I am deſcribing in ſtriking colours. The one is reſpected and beloved; happy in himſelf, and the cauſe of happineſs in others: the other, though he is always purſuing pleaſure, never finds it pure and exalted; but ſpends a feveriſh being in vanity and vice, and precipitates that diſſolution at which all but himſelf have reaſon to rejoice.

Now the leiſure which this profeſſion frequently enjoys above all others, as it is often the cauſe of vice, ſo it affords a fine opportunity for making improvement. But how ſhall the uncultivated ſoldier begin? He was taken from his ſchool before he had laid any foundation on which he might build the fabric of learning. Where this is the caſe, we muſt not hope that he will

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on long experience and extenſive obſervation, that the moderns poſſeſs an indiſputable ſuperiority. In uſeful ſcience, and in natural philoſophy, the ancients fall ſo ſhort, as not to bear the compariſon. Ariſtotle and Pliny committed their dreams to writing, inſtead of an authentic natural hiſtory, and a rational ſyſtem of phyſics. No one can juſtly queſtion their ingenuity, but they wanted authentic matter for its exertion. They were contented with reports, not only concerning ſubjects which they had no opportunity of examining, but concerning thoſe which fell under their notice. They induced general remarks from too ſmall a number of particulars. Pliny indeed ſeems to have written a phyſical romance, with an intention to entertain, rather than to diſcover and communicate ſevere truths. The more marvellous his repreſentation, the better it anſwered his purpoſe, and it was not very likely to be ſtrictly canvaſſed in an age when the true ſpirit of philoſophical enquiry was totally unknown.

The ancients had not thoſe inſtruments of ſcience, the air-pump, the teleſcope, and the microſcope. And among their principal obſtructions, is to be numbered, the want of knowing the futility of hypotheſis, when unſupported by experiment. While fancy was allowed to amuſe herſelf in framing ſyſtems of her own, reaſon ſunk in repoſe, and declined the painful taſk of cloſe examination. The ſincereſt admirer of the ancients will therefore give up their pretenſions to ſcientific excellence; and though he will recommend the ſtudy of Pliny as a claſſic who writes agreeably, yet will he adviſe the votary of ſcience to ſubſtitute, in the place of him and of all the ancient naturaliſts, the works of Boyle, of Newton, of Buffon, and of the numerous writers in the Philoſophical Tranſactions.

But for their defects in natural, the ancients compenſate by their excellence in moral, philoſophy. Mechanical inſtruments were not wanted to make obſervations on human nature. Natural ſagacity, improved by generous education, and exerciſed in a civilized community, was enabled to make juſt concluſions concerning the powers, the paſſions, the duties, the vices of a man as an individual, and as connected with

with others in his domeſtic, ſocial, and civil relations. But the knowledge of nature and of her operations, compared with the knowledge of ourſelves and of our duty, is of ſmall conſequence.

It is juſtly remarked, that our Engliſh divines are the beſt moraliſts with reſpect to matter, whom the world ever produced. And for this it is eaſy to account. They eſtabliſhed their precepts on the firm baſis of revealed religion, and not on the ſandy foundation of human ſyſtems. But the misfortune is, that they are little attended to by thoſe who ſtand moſt in need of reformation. The libertine, the man of the world, the polite modern philoſopher, has been taught to aſſociate the idea of dulneſs to a ſermon, and would fear the imputation of prejudice, if he were to profeſs a belief of received religions, and conform his actions to their precepts. His creed is formed from the opinions of Voltaire, Rouſſeau, Helvetius, Hume, and many others, who have perverted taſte, genius, and learning, to the purpoſe of ſupporting unlimited libertiniſm.

It is not likely, that he who is taught to look upon himſelf only as an animal, furniſhed indeed with a ſuperior degree of ſagacity, but, like his fellow-brutes, doomed to periſh for ever at death, ſhould poſſeſs that elevation of ſentiment which Chriſtianity inſpires, and which is neceſſary to conſtitute the great man in the private as well as in the public ſcenes of life. His principles neceſſarily lead him to aſſimilate with thoſe animals, among whom he is ambitious of being numbered. The enjoyments of ſenſe will be, in his idea, the chief good; and that ſevere virtue, which can alone render him ſerviceable to the great community of mankind, or diſtinguiſh him honourably in the ſociety of which he is a member, he will eſteem the characteriſtic of viſionary enthuſiaſts, who know not the nature of man and the end of his exiſtence.

But ancient philoſophy teaches to reſpect humanity. To have that reverence for one's ſelf, which ariſes from a juſt ſenſe of the ſuperior nature and endowments of a human creature, was a precept of the earlieſt philoſophers, and was thought to be the beſt ſecurity for a generous and virtuous conduct. It is not pride;

for pride conſiſts in arrogating merits to which it has no claim: but it is an adequate idea of our own dignity in the ſcale of being, when compared with the brutes, and a reſolution to ſupport it. Yet how ſhould he think or act like the lord of the Creation, who is taught by the inſinuations of modern philoſophers, that man is to be claſſed in the ſame ſpecies with the ape and the monkey?

Among the profligate, indeed, and the uninſtructed, we ſee humanity ſadly degenerated. Attentive only to the ſolicitations of the ſenſes, and obedient to every paſſion, the vulgar, both of the higher and the lower ranks, lead a life truly and merely animal. If, however, it be wiſdom to live according to nature, and the newly-divulged opinion, that man is no more by nature than a ſagacious brute, be true, then are thoſe whom we call the baſeſt and moſt worthleſs of mankind the patterns of imitation, and the only philoſophers. Education, on theſe principles, is no longer neceſſary. The paſſions are competent guides, and the more violent they are, the more unambiguous their directions. Let our ſchools be ſhut up, for why ſhould we be at the pains to ſtudy, while true wiſdom and virtue are to be learned at an eaſy rate, of our brother-beaſts in the ſtable and the dog-kennel?

It has been the aim of the earlier Poets, Legiſlators, Sages, and Reformers, to advance human nature from its primeval rudeneſs, to all the perfection of which it is capable in a ſtate of civilization. Men in general have willingly followed their dictates, and have found progreſſive happineſs in progreſſive improvement. It was reſerved for the preſent age of paradox, to reconcile the idea of advancement with retrograde motion, of improving human life, by reſtoring habits, principles, and weakneſſes, long exploded and overcome. It is well known, that ſeveral celebrated writers have inferred the abſurdity of many, not only innocent, but laudable and beneficial notions and practices, from their being unknown, or different from thoſe eſtabliſhed in ſavage nations in the ſtate of nature. In order to imbibe ideas of decency and moral fitneſs, they have obliquely referred us to the groves of Otaheite. That

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ſuch writers ſhould have appeared is wonderful; but it is ſtill more ſo, that they ſhould have found numerous readers and admirers. And it is a ſtriking event in the hiſtory of mankind, that, after the efforts of ſeveral thouſand years in promoting civilization, many were found deſirous of returning to the wretched practices of ſavage life.

But even he who is taught to revere the wiſdom of the naked Indian, and to deſpiſe the improvement of his own times and nation, is more likely to think and act with dignity, than the man who believes himſelf a machine. Such an one, to be conſiſtent, muſt renounce the idea of the ſoul's ſupremacy over the actions of the body, and muſt reſign himſelf to the impulſe of that blood, of which alone he believes himſelf to conſiſt. As an engine he will yield to every motion without reſiſtance; for the perfection of the machine depends on its moving with the leaſt poſſible friction or impediment. The miſtake of him who looks on himſelf in this light, is almoſt as abſurd as that of the hypochondriac viſionary who, in the temporary madneſs of his reverie, imagines himſelf transformed into inanimate matter.

The dark and diſputatious ſtyle and manner in which the modern philoſopher vents his ſceptical ideas, though it may give his diſciples a turn for metaphyſics, and teach them to involve a diſpute in perplexity, has very little tendency to improve the underſtanding, to give a clearneſs of conception, or to promote a frank and manly diſpoſition.

It is indeed with a pleaſure equal to that of turning from a putrifying carcaſe, to behold the living body in a ſtate of youth and beauty, that one leaves the poor inventions of the vain ſceptic, and the gloomy metaphyſician, to recollect the names and opinions of Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, and Cicero. From theſe I learn, what is confirmed by Chriſtianity, that I have a ſoul within me, which ſhall ſurvive its periſhable habitation. Theſe inform me, that human nature approaches to the divine; that virtue will make me happy in myſelf, and recommend me to the favour of that Being who conſtantly ſuperintends the world he firſt created.

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The philoſophy of the moderns excludes all religion. Infidelity is its baſis. But can there be a truly great man without religion? There may be a cunning, a witty, an audacious man; but there cannot be a great man without religion. Nor will he become a good ſenator, a good judge, a good commander, or fill the lower departments of civil and ſocial life with integrity and honour, who diſregards an oath, and from principle ſeeks only ſelf-intereſt and private gratification.

The man of the world, it is true, will often diſcharge the duties of his ſtation with regular propriety. A regard for fame, a deſire to enlarge and to preſerve connections will keep him within the bounds of apparent rectitude. But, where deviation can be concealed, where compliance with temptation is compatible with ſafety, what ſhall reſtrain him? Nothing in the moral ſyſtem of a philoſophical unbeliever.

No. XXIII. ON THE STYLE OF HISTORY.

THE end of oratory is to perſuade, of poetry to pleaſe, and of hiſtory to inſtruct by the recital of true events. The ſtyle of each muſt be adapted to produce the intended purpoſe, not only of the writer of any particular oration, poem, or hiſtory, but of oratory, poetry, and hiſtory in general. Any compoſition, arrogating either of theſe names, but aſſuming ornaments foreign to its nature, is faulty. It may be popular from faſhion, perſonal influence, and caprice, but it will not deſcend to poſterity; becauſe it is inconſiſtent with thoſe rules, which have been long univerſally eſtabliſhed, and which, for this reaſon, have been long and univerſally eſtabliſhed, becauſe they were found agreeable to the conſtitution of the human mind, and beſt fitted to produce on it a powerful and genuine effect.

The diction of oratory ſhould be nervous, pointed, impetuous, and adorned with every embelliſhment which rhetoric has invented. Poetry admits a ſtyle made

made up of graces. Every ornament, natural and artificial, may find a place in it. But it is not ſo with hiſtory: for the purpoſe of hiſtory is truth, and truth requires no more than to be fairly, openly, and unaffectedly exhibited. If then the embelliſhments appropriated to poetry and eloquence are borrowed by the hiſtorian, though his work may delight a vitiated taſte, he muſt not be recommended as a model. Hiſtory ſhould indeed poſſeſs a dignity; but it ſhould ariſe, like the majeſtic dignity of Grecian architecture, from the ſimplicity of its ornaments.

No good rule is unſupported by a reaſon. Now the reaſon why hiſtory admits not a profuſion of embelliſhment is, that ſuch embelliſhment cannot be applied without an obvious appearance of art; but the appearance of art tends to call in queſtion the hiſtorian's veracity, his primary and indiſpenſable excellence. The mind is naturally ſuſpicious, and, where it finds art in one inſtance, it will expect that it exiſts in another, and is not ſeen, only becauſe it is concealed with more ſubtilty.

Livy and Tacitus, excellent as they are in general, have been convicted of deviating into poetry. There are many paſſages in both of them, which, if you attend to the accentual and not to the ſyllabic quantity, may be ſcanned like hexameter verſes. The language and thoughts in Livy's deſcriptions are often highly poetical; as, to mention, for inſtance, one particular paſſage, is the celebrated account of the combats of the Horatii and Curiatii. But this muſt be ſaid in the defence of both, that they are tranſported by the warmth of their minds, when they are deſcribing a very intereſting tranſaction, and that, for the moſt part, their narrative proceeds with all the dignity and ſimplicity of a correct taſte. Their deviations into poetry, though not ſtrictly defenſible, yet, as they appear to be the genuine effects of their feelings excited by extraordinary occaſions, are really not diſpleaſing. We can bear a few occaſional flaſhes; but our eyes would turn away with pain from a long and continued glare. Yet names muſt not overpower the authority of reaſon and juſt criticiſm; and, if Herodotus, or Livy, or Tacitus, have

have admitted ornaments inconſiſtent either in their nature and number with an unaffected ſimplicity, they are ſo far faulty.

The aſſertion, that unaffected ſimplicity is the moſt beautiful grace of the hiſtorical ſtyle, and that the diction ſhould not be ſuch, either in the conſtruction or ſelection of words, as to allure the attention of the reader from the facts to the words, from the hero to the writer, though it is perfectly conſiſtent with my own opinion, does not rely for ſupport on my judgment alone, but is fully confirmed by the beſt judges of antiquity, Ariſtotle, Demetrius Phalereus, Lucian, and Cicero. I have read ſeveral paſſages of their writings, which I forbear to quote, becauſe it was agreed in projecting this edition, not to inſert any paſſages in languages which might not be underſtood by the general reader.

With theſe ideas then in our minds, we will take a view of hiſtory, as it appears at preſent in the hands of recent hiſtorians, who have boldly claimed and received the palm.

It is generally agreed among learned critics, that ſome of the moſt popular hiſtorians of France have violated the gravity and dignity of the hiſtoric page, by perpetual attempts to be witty. When the reader takes up the hiſtory of a celebrated age and a renowned king, his mind is in a tone to admit elevated ideas, and ſuch as are conſiſtent with ſo noble and majeſtic a ſubject. And, though his imagination may be a little diverted, his taſte and judgment are offended at finding, in the place of manly reflections, every paragraph terminating with the pert witticiſm of an epigram. It is evident, that ſuch works may afford pleaſure, becauſe many have been pleaſed with them; but it is equally certain, that the pleaſure is not ſuch as reſults from legitimate hiſtory. The writer evidently labours to diſplay himſelf and his own ingenuity; but it is one great ſecret in the art of writing, that the writer ſhould keep himſelf out of ſight, and cauſe the ideas, which he means to convey, of whatever kind they may be, to engroſs the reader's attention. They cannot indeed otherwiſe produce their proper effect. If

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there are any readers, who chooſe to have the writers preſent to their view, rather than the matter on which he writes, they may be ſaid to reſemble thoſe ſpectators who go to the theatre rather to ſee and hear a favourite actor, than to attend to the perſons of the drama. It is not Shakeſpeare's Hamlet or Lear whom they admire, but ſome name which ſtands in rubric characters on the walls and in the play-bills.

But let us confine our preſent remarks to the hiſtorical taſte, which has of late prevailed in our own country. It is certainly better than the French taſte; but, if we may judge by the reception of one or two works out of ſeveral, it is by no means perfect. The hiſtorian of Charles the Fifth poſſeſſes ſo many excellencies, that it is almoſt ſacrilegious to detract from his merit. But no writer is perfect; and I doubt not, from the opinion I entertain of his taſte and candour, that he will confeſs, when the ardour of compoſition is abated, that his ſtyle has deviated from the hiſtorical to the declamatory. He relates the councils as well as the wars of nations with all the vehemence of a Demoſthenes, and the rapid eloquence of a Ciceronian Philippic. The ſtyle is glowing and animated in a high degree; but does nature dictate, that a long and diffuſe diſſertation on ſuch ſubjects as the feudal ſtate, or on others equally diſpaſſionate in themſelves, ſhould be treated in a ſtyle which would become an orator in the act of rouzing his ſluggiſh countrymen to repel an invader? I will not enter into an enquiry, whether ſuch long diſſertations legitimately belong to hiſtory or to another ſpecies of compoſition. I believe they might more properly be claſſed under the name of Political Diſſertations. They find no place in the purer models of antiquity; and the reader has certainly a right to complain, when they occupy a diſproportionate part of a work, and appear in the place of facts, on which he might make his own reflections. But the fire and *vis vivida*, or the life and the ſpirit which is diffuſed over this reſpectable writer's page, induces us to forget awhile the rules preſcribed by the frigidity of criticiſm. What though he ſeems to have made Demoſthenes his model, inſtead of Livy or Herodotus, yet ſurely, what

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bears any reſemblance to the ſpirit of that noble Athenian, cannot fail to delight and improve. And it ought to be remembered, to the honour of this writer, that he has not made his hiſtory the vehicle of any opinions deſtructive of the civil or religious ſyſtems of his country.

It would be happy, if this praiſe could be extended to all our hiſtorians; but there has appeared a hiſtory, the faults of whoſe ſtyle ſhould have paſſed unnoticed, if the matter had been leſs reprehenſible. The ſtyle diſplays not the honeſt warmth of a Robertſon, but appears with an air of ſoft and ſubtile inſinuation, better adapted to introduce a lurking poiſon. The words are well choſen; but the collocation of them is feeble and effeminate, though painfully elaborate and affected. There is ſcarcely a ſentence throughout the work without an idle epithet, which, while it loads and wearies the ear, adds little to the meaning, and leſs to the force of the period. There is a diſguſting affectation of faſtidious delicacy. There is alſo a tedious ſameneſs in the ſtyle, which renders the reading a toil, and which will gradually conſign the work to its peaceful ſhelf, as ſoon as the faſhionable world ſhall have found another idol; which, indeed, cannot be a diſtant event, ſince variety is eſſential to its enjoyments; and great books, though written by a man of faſhion, an infidel, and a Lord of the Admiralty, are ſtill great evils.

The very weak, inſolent, and paſſionate manner, in which this writer anſwered one of his opponents, leaves his readers to conclude, that his philoſophy has more in it of oſtentation than reality. The whole work, indeed, exhibits marks of exceſſive vanity and conceit. But, ſuch as it is, the learning and the labour diſplayed in it ſhould have ſecured my reſpect, had it not inſolently and wickedly laboured to exterminate the laſt remains of morality and religion from my country. It furniſhes arguments for the ignorant and vicious in their diſputing aſſemblies, and thus indirectly tends to ſap the foundations of human happineſs and of civil government. For, though the more learned and the better part of the community deſpiſe the weak and vain and

and wicked attempt, yet it must be remembered, that the majority consists of the foolish and the profligate.

It was a mean subterfuge to make history the oblique channel of theological infidelity. An ingenuous young man takes up the book, from the laudable motive of improving his mind with historical knowledge. But, as he reads, he finds himself corrupted, and is cheated into irreligion and libertinism. The author, like others of his class, meant little more than to acquire distinction by alarming mankind by the attack of what they have been taught to hold dear and sacred. But though vanity is indisputably the motive, the consequences are no less malignant than if the work had originated in malice.

How much better had he consulted his own comfort in the evil day, on the bed of sickness, and at the hour of death; had he adopted the humility of the Christian, and aimed at no other distinction than the esteem and applause of the worthy! But such is the vanity of man's heart, that he is willing to resign, for the sake of an imaginary life of fame, all hopes of a real and happy immortality.

No. XXIV. ON THE MANNER OF WRITING VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

IT is observed by those decisive critics, the booksellers, who judge of the merit of a book by the criterion of its sale, that few books have succeeded better of late than voyages and travels. Now, as that which succeeds is pursued with ardour, every superficial stripling, who takes a trip, takes also notes as he goes along; and, when he returns, puts them into a bookseller's hands to be furbished up, and swelled to a marketable size; and then out skips a brace of volumes. This, it must be confessed, is an ingenious method of making a journey pay its own expences.

It is not uncommon for Criticism to employ herself in pointing out the end or purpose of any species of writings

writings or writers; as, for inſtance, the end of poetry, which is to pleaſe; of hiſtory, which is to inſtruct; and ſo of the reſt. Now, without any great theoretical ſkill, and without peruſing a page of Ariſtotle, it is very clear, that the end of the greater part of writings and writers is the copy-money. What will ſell, is often the firſt object; not what is conformable to the eternal laws of truth and propriety, nor what will ſerve the eſſential intereſts of ſociety.

To pleaſe, is certainly a very valuable end. He who pleaſes innocently has performed his taſk well; but here, it ſeems, lies the difficulty. In order to pleaſe, it is found neceſſary, through the dearth of genius, to introduce licentious ideas, and to ſtrike at ſome of the outworks of religion and morality.

The Voyages to the South Seas are, indeed, in their deſign, of a kind very ſuperior to thoſe which I mean to cenſure. They do honour to the reign in which they were undertaken. They exhibit human nature in new lights, and furniſh abundant matter for philoſophical reflection. They are to the curious mind of man, moſt delightfully entertaining; but the firſt writer of them fell into a moſt lamentable error. Inſtead of relating the events, and leaving the reader to comment on them, he not only makes the comments himſelf, but makes ſuch comments as tend to invalidate ſome of the moſt comfortable parts of the creed of his countrymen. Every reader was aſtoniſhed when he found a Hawkeſworth, who had ſupported virtue and religion with ſuch peculiar energy of diction and of ſentiment, *adventuring* at laſt to call in queſtion a particular Providence. It is very certain, that we might have been informed of ſome remarkable features in the Otaheitean character, if the indelicate and corrupting repreſentations had been totally omitted. But who can wonder at what was written, when a Sandwich was the patron?

Who has read the exquiſite touches of nature and ſenſibility in Sterne's Sentimental Journey, without feeling his nerves vibrate with every tender emotion! Sterne has ſhewn what a true ſimplicity of ſtyle, and a faithful adherence to nature, are able to effect. I wiſh it were poſſible to give him the praiſe of morality

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as well as of genius; but the poiſon he conveys is ſubtile, and the more dangerous as it is palatable. I believe no young mind ever peruſed his books without finding thoſe paſſions rouſed and inflamed, which, after all that the noveliſt can advance in their favour, are the copious ſources of all human miſery. Many a connection, begun with the fine ſentimentality, which Sterne has recommended and encreaſed, has terminated in diſeaſe, infamy, want, madneſs, ſuicide, and a gibbet. Every writer, whatever may be his life, ſhould take the ſide of virtue in his public writings, and endeavour to reſtrain the irregularity of thoſe affections, which, under every reſtraint, are ſtill capable of producing more evil than any other cauſe throughout the whole ſyſtem of human affairs. It is our reaſon which wants all the aids which art can beſtow. Our paſſions, without the ſtimulus of licentious or indulgent principles, will have ſtrength ſufficient to produce all that nature meant, and much more than ſhe means they ſhould produce.

Much of Sterne's journey is certainly founded on fiction; but it has nevertheleſs afforded a model to thoſe, who have pretended to relate nothing but the truth. His ſentimental and exceſſive ſenſibility was found ſo engaging, that moſt of the ſubſequent authors of travels have been induced to interweave into the body of their work an amorous epiſode. We have been made acquainted with the *embonpoint* of a ſervant at an inn, or rather at a hedge alehouſe, and the parting pangs of the ſmitten traveller and his Dulcinea del Toboſo, have been recorded in London for our edification. The authors might poſſibly have been involved in a low and criminal amour, or have paid attention to a Madame de Blot, or a Madame d'Urſay; but why inform their readers of their gallantry, unleſs they mean to draw attention by inflaming thoſe combuſtible paſſions, which, in youthful hearts, catch fire, like tinder, at a ſpark? The book however will be pretty ſure to ſell, and therefore will be encouraged by thoſe modern Mæcenas's, the bookſellers and the circulating librarians.

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Nothing is more easy than to display that kind of wit, which consists in obscenity and in blasphemy. He cannot fail to attract notice, who attacks opinions which are held sacred; and it was not difficult for him, who panted for distinction only, to obtain it by burning the temple of Diana.

A few arrows have therefore been obliquely thrown, by the travellers of late years, on the Christian religion. The masque is the ridicule of popery; but the masque is transparent. All religion is indirectly stigmatised as weak superstition. Scriptural phrases are used with wanton profaneness in some of our most popular travels, and those levities and vices gently palliated, which are forbidden by the sacred laws, and by the British laws, and which British virtue has not yet generally admitted.

I really cannot help thinking, that voyages and travels require fewer of these or of any arts to render them entertaining than any other writings. Every man of sense and observation must see, as he passes through a foreign country, in every town and village into which he enters, some characteristic and singular circumstances, which cannot fail to please in the recital. Truth only wants to be represented to render the narrative alluring. If any thing occurs injurious to the morals or the political principles of one's own country, it ought to be either totally suppressed, or represented with concomitant censure. I have observed one favourite topic of the conversation as well as writing of many travellers: it is the charming licentiousness of a foreign sabbath. They think their country much in the dark in many particulars; but the prohibition of public diversions on a Sunday, they consider as past all endurance, as impolitic, and as a relique of British barbarism.

With respect to the contents of some books of travels, which have been well received, I cannot help thinking it a species of literary fraud, when their authors fill them with long historical accounts, which every man might have collected at his own fire-side, as well as at Venice or at Naples. And I own I was once greatly cheated

cheated in finding a very tedious treatiſe on the conſumption in a book of travels, where the title-page led me to expect a large fund of information on foreign ſubjects only.

Travellers have often been cenſured for enumerating what are called trifling occurrences. I think the cenſure is unjuſt. Trifling occurrences are often very amuſing; but, if they were only amuſing, and took up the room of other valuable matter, the cenſure might be well founded: but they lead to very important ſpeculations. They ſuggeſt hints; and hints, to a fertile mind, are more acceptable than formal diſcourſes; evidently becauſe they lead the mind to exert its own activity. I own I am pleaſed when the traveller ſpeaks in the firſt perſon, and conducts us from inn to inn, and town to town, with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance. Every thing which concerns him intereſts us. We feel as he did in all his inconveniencies and diſtreſſes, and derive from the whole account of ſmall particulars, as well as great, a very valuable ſhare and ſpecies of experience.

The ſtyle of voyages and travels ſhould be plain, ſimple, perſpicuous, and unaffected. I think they ſeldom appear to great advantage, but when written in the words of the traveller or voyager, at the very time at which the circumſtances which he relates occurred. They have then the native hue and complexion of truth, which ſeldom fails to attach the mind when clearly preſented to its view. It was therefore a want of judgment and of juſtice, which cauſed the writing of Cook's Voyages to be given to Hawkeſworth. Hawkeſworth, it is reported, gained ſeveral thouſand pounds by thoſe materials, which poor Cook had gone round the world to collect, and to relate which, as it afterwards appeared, he was well able. The Public, it is well remembered, received Cook's narrative much more favourably than the impertinent philoſophy of Hawkeſworth. When the information is ſo new and curious as to confine attention by the force of its own attractions, the mind muſt nauſeate obtruded ſuperfluity.

When voyages and travels are free from thoſe faults which I have endeavoured to point out, they are capable

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of affording a very high and a very pure delight. I know of no books of amuſement whatever ſo well adapted to young people. They ſatisfy that eager thirſt after knowledge, which is found very ſtrong at a boyiſh age, and they contain nothing which can corrupt their imaginations. They intereſt the mind as much as a novel; but, inſtead of rendering it effeminate and debauched, they make it uſefully inquiſitive, and furniſh it with matter for reflection. Any book, which innocently delights the young mind, is, at the ſame time, much more improving than the beſt books written too profoundly or too ſeriouſly to be capable of attracting puerile attention. Anſon's Voyage, for inſtance, will contribute more to call forth genius, and open the bloſſoms of the mind, than a dull didactic treatiſe of the moſt ſagacious philoſopher.

It is then an uſeful attempt to endeavour to clear a ſpecies of books, which are capable of doing much good, and affording much pleaſure, from thoſe evils, which a deſire of popularity and of gain has often admitted into them. What is already publiſhed cannot indeed be recalled; but it may poſſibly be uſeful to ſuggeſt to ſucceeding writers in this department, that they will then only deſerve the eſteem and favour of their countrymen, when they import from foreign lands the improvements which they find in them, and not when they introduce additions to that folly, vice, and irreligion, which abound in all countries without importation.

No. XXV. ON THE FOLLY OF BEING ANXIOUSLY CURIOUS TO ENQUIRE WHAT IS SAID OF US IN OUR ABSENCE.

THE beſt diſpoſitions have uſually the moſt ſenſibility. They have alſo that delicate regard for their reputations, which renders them ſorely afflicted by the ſecret attacks of calumny and detraction. It is not an unreaſonable and exceſſive ſelf love, but a regard to that,

that, without which a feeling mind cannot be happy, which renders many of us attentive to every word which is whiſpered of us in our abſence.

From whatever motive it ariſes, an anxious curioſity to know the reports concerning ourſelves is an infallible cauſe of miſery. No virtue, no prudence, no caution, no generoſity, can preſerve us from miſrepreſentation. Our conduct muſt be miſunderſtood by weak intellects, and by thoſe who ſee only a part of it, and haſtily form a judgment of the whole. Every man of eminence has thoſe who hate, who envy, and who affect to deſpiſe him. Theſe will ſee his actions with a jaundiced eye, and will repreſent them to others in the colours in which themſelves behold them. Many from careleſſneſs, wantonneſs, or from a deſire to entertain their company, are inclined to ſport with reſpectable characters, and love to diſplay their ingenuity by the invention of a ſcandalous tale. Nothing renders a man more agreeable in many companies than his poſſeſſing a fund of delicious anecdotes.

It is certain then, that from weakneſs, wantonneſs, or malevolence, a man, whoſe merit renders him a topic of converſation, will be miſrepreſented. He, who ſolicitouſly enquires what is ſaid of him, will certainly hear ſomething which will render him uneaſy. His uneaſineſs will be encreaſed, when he finds the poiſoned arrow is ſhot in the dark; ſo that no abilities can repel the blow, and no innocence ſhield him from the aſſailant. Open attacks can be openly oppoſed; but the obſcure inſinuation proceeds without the poſſibility of reſiſtance, like the worm, which penetrates the ſhip which has withſtood the cannon. It is better, therefore, not to be too anxious to diſcover attacks, which, when diſcovered, add to our torment, but cannot be ſucceſsfully reſiſted.

Indeed, we are apt to feel upon theſe occaſions more acutely than we ought. We are told by a menial ſervant, or any other of our ſpies, that a perſon, whom we eſteemed our friend, has ſpoken ſlightingly of us, made a joke upon us, or caſt a ſevere reflection. Immediately on hearing the information, our blood boils within us. The indignity, we imagine, calls for our warmeſt

warmeſt reſentment. Our friend is diſcarded, or ſuſpected, as a treacherous wretch, unworthy of our love and confidence. This haſty ebullition of reſentment is, I am ready to allow, very natural, and ſo are many other diſorders of the paſſions. But, if we were to ſtudy the caſe, and acquire a right idea of the ways of men in ſociety, we ſhould find that in ſuch inſtances our reſentments may not only be too violent, but cauſeleſs; for we ſhould recollect, that the human mind, without abſolutely relinquiſhing its principles, is often inclined, from the incidental influence of temper, of levity, of frolic, of intemperance, of precipitation, to ſpeak inconſiſtently with them, and in a manner which the general tenour of our conduct uniformly contradicts. We ſhould alſo recollect, that, beſides this temporary variableneſs of the mind, the tongue is unruly, and, when the ſpirits or the paſſions are high, utters almoſt ſpontaneouſly what the mind, which ought to hold the bridle, would willingly keep in. If we reflect upon theſe things, and upon what has fallen under our experience, we may perhaps diſcover, that even real and worthy friends may ſpeak unkindly of us, without any deſign to hurt us, or to violate the bonds of friendſhip. It is the infirmity of human nature which cauſes unintentional lapſes in the duties of friendſhip, as well as in all other duties. By too eagerly liſtening to the caſual cenſure whiſpered in a careleſs manner, we encreaſe the evil, and cauſe a rupture where none was intended.

A man, who is conſtantly ſolicitous to hear the reports which are raiſed of him, of his family, and of his conduct, depends, in a great meaſure for happineſs, upon his ſervants; upon thoſe, whoſe ideas are narrow, and whoſe hearts too often ungrateful; who overhear a part of a converſation, and ſupply the reſt, when they repeat it, by invention; who love to entertain the viſitors and acquaintance with the private affairs of the houſe in which they live, and who are apt to blacken the characters of their ſupporters and protectors, in revenge for a reprimand, or from the natural malignity of a bad heart. The tongue, ſaid Juvenal, is the worſt part of a bad ſervant. But the maſter

master of a family, who is always endeavouring to collect what is uttered by his humble friends, as servants have been called, will find himself subject to perpetual mortification. And it is a circumstance which renders his solicitude peculiarly unwise, that, after all the idle stories which their garrulity or resentment may lead them to propagate, they may be as good servants as any others he might engage in their room, or as human nature, in its uncultivated state, is found in general to afford. When their foolish words are uttered, they vanish into air; and the servants return to their duties, and probably will serve their masters as usefully and as faithfully as if nothing had been said in their angry or unthinking moments. So little meaning and weight are there in the words of the weak and the passionate, and so inconsistent with wisdom to listen to that tale, which, while it sinks into the mind of him who hears that he is the subject of it, passes over the minds of others, as the shadow over the earth; or, supposing it to be noticed, remembered, and even capable of doing him an injury, he can only make it more mischievous by paying attention to it, and by giving it an importance not its own.

It will conduce, in a peculiar manner, to the peace of all persons who superintend large families, or large numbers of assistants, or of subordinate classes; such as the governors of schools and colleges, the generals of armies, the employers of manufacturers, and many others in situations somewhat similar; if they can habituate themselves to disregard those calumnies, which will certainly be poured upon them, though they should not merit ill treatment. Their hearts will indeed often be wrung with grief, if they are sensible of every ill-natured whisper which makes its way, like the worm in the earth, and may at last corrode the worthiest bosom, if the breast-plate of reason is not previously applied. Whoever has many individuals under his direction, is exposed to the malice of them all; and, as dispositions and tempers are often diametrically opposite, he can scarcely fail to offend as many as he pleases: for the very conduct which pleases one set will give offence to the other. Friends, as well as enemies,

nious, are liable to ill-humour and caprice; and every malignant remark is as naturally levelled at the superintendant as the musquet at the target. A man, who has many persons under him, must not only not go in search of the darts which are thrown at him, but, even when he cannot avoid seeing them, must let them waste their force unreguarded. If he does not adopt this conduct, his life will be a perpetual torment, and may possibly terminate in that which is the frequent death of good men, a broken heart.

Perhaps we might be less inclined to enquire what is said of us in our absence, and less affected with it when discovered, if we considered how freely we ourselves are apt to speak even of those we love. We censure and we ridicule others, in the gaiety and thoughtlessness of conversation, and what we have said makes so little impression upon ourselves that we forget it; and, in the next hour, probably speak with honour of the same persons, and then, and on all occasions, would be ready to serve them. Beware of the man, says Horace, who defends not his absent friend when he is blamed by others, and who blames him himself. But such is his nature, that, in a fit of levity, a man will speak of another, and hear him spoken of, in such terms as, in his serious moments, he would resent. Let any man ask himself, whether he has not often said such things of others, without meaning to injure them, or ever thinking seriously of what he was saying, as, if he were to hear that they were said of himself, in any manner whatever, he would not warmly retaliate? Let him then endeavour to see things in the same light, when he finds he has been carelessly censured, in which he saw them when he carelessly censured others. Indeed, it must be allowed, that a man of sensibility and honour cannot take too much pains to vindicate his character from any open and direct calumny; but the same spirit, which leads him to that manly conduct, will induce him to leave the dirty dealers in scandal to themselves, and to their mean occupations.

Though a delicate regard for character is virtuous and rational, yet it is really true, that we all estimate our own value among others much higher than it is estimated

eſtimated by them. What is ſaid of us ſeldom ſinks ſo deeply in their minds as, from a vain idea of our own importance, we are apt to imagine. We are occaſionally talked of, it may be, in the courſe of common converſation, and ſerve for topics, together with the weather, the wind, and the news; but he who thinks that he is the conſtant object of his neighbours accurate and cloſe inſpection, is ignorant of human nature. Man's chief object of attention is himſelf; and though, to fill an idle hour, he may talk of others, it is careleſsly and indifferently; and, whether he ſpeaks in praiſe or diſpraiſe, he often means neither to ſerve nor injure. From ſuppoſing ourſelves of more conſequence with others than we are, we ſuſpect, that they are converſing about us when they really think not of us; and, when they are known by us to have ſpoken unkindly or contemptuouſly, we immediately conſider them as declared enemies. Our ſuſpicions are awakened when led to entertain bad opinions of mankind, and our good-humour is ſoured for ever. "But "good-humour," ſays an elegant writer, "is the ſalt "which gives a ſeaſoning to the feaſt of life; and "which, if it be wanting, renders the feaſt incom-"plete. Many cauſes contribute to impair this ami-"able quality; but nothing, perhaps, more than bad "opinions of mankind." To avoid bad opinions of mankind, much of their ill deeds, and ill ſayings, muſt be attributed to thoughtleſſneſs, and not only to malignity; we muſt not always be on the watch to hear what is ſaid againſt us in an unguarded hour; we muſt be humble, and conſider, whether we do not treat others juſt as we complain of being treated by them; and, while we complain of mankind, whether ourſelves, and the diſpoſitions which we entertain, do not furniſh ſome of the juſteſt cauſes of the complaint. Upon the whole, let it be our firſt object to do our duty, and not to be very anxious about any cenſure but that of conſcience.

Let the weak and the ill-natured enjoy the poor pleaſure of whiſpering calumny and detraction, and let the man of ſenſe and ſpirit diſplay the wiſdom and dignity of diſregarding them. The dog bays the moon,

but the moon ſtill ſhines on in all its beautiful ſerenity and luſtre, and moves in its orbit with undiſturbed regularity.

The ſcriptures, among all their other recommendations, abound with paſſages which finely portray the human heart. I will cite one paſſage, which is very appoſite to the ſubject of this paper: "Take no heed "to all words that are ſpoken, leſt thou hear thy "ſervant curſe thee. For oftentimes alſo, thine own "heart knoweth, that thou thyſelf likewiſe haſt curſed "others."

No. XXVI. ON THE EFFICACY OF MORAL INSTRUCTION.

IT ſeems to be tacitly agreed among men of the world, that, though books of moral inſtruction may afford pleaſure to the young, or to thoſe who love books, as a connoiſſeur loves a picture, or a virtuoſo his medals, yet they are really of little utility in the actual conduct of life. They aſſert, that a few practical and artful maxims, collected from an actual intercourſe with the living world, will be more ſerviceable than all the wiſdom of the moral philoſopher.

It is very certain, that a knowledge of the world, as it is called, will teach ſuch a kind of wiſdom as will tend to advance one's intereſt, and procure connections; but ſtill I muſt maintain, that in itſelf, and uncontrolled by moral principles, it is a deſpicable kind of wiſdom; for it is always incompatible with the ingenuouſneſs of a good mind. It inculcates a ſubmiſſion to many meannefſes. It renders life a continued ſeries of deceit; and, indeed, ſo far from eſteeming ſuch wiſdom ſuperior to that which we learn in books, I cannot help thinking it a more refined, and conſequently a more execrable ſpecies of knavery.

The morality of books is therefore neceſſary to give this ſubordinate wiſdom, value, and dignity. It enlarges the views, and induces us not to eſteem our intereſt

tereſt at a higher rate than our conſcience and our independence. It enables us to join, to the alluring qualities of an inſinuating addreſs, the reſpectable ones of a manly ſpirit and unſhaken integrity. He who ſets out in life with a mind untinctured with the morality of books, though he may probably attain ſucceſs, can neither deſerve it, nor adorn it, nor enjoy it. He who ſets out in life with moral principles deeply fixed in his heart, though a deceiving and deceived world ſhould neglect him, will find in his heart a ſource of joy, which the world, with all its riches and honours, cannot beſtow.

But there is another objection raiſed againſt the efficacy of the moral inſtruction of books. The moraliſt is accuſed of requiring too much, and of preſcribing rules and ſuggeſting ideas of excellence, at which human creatures can never arrive. With all his pretended knowledge of the heart of man, he is ſaid to be, in general, quite ignorant of it, and to derive all his conceptions from beings who have not yet fallen. To learn ſuch wiſdom as will be really uſeful, we muſt ſhut thoſe books where pictures are exhibited, whoſe originals are not to be found in this ſublunary ſphere. The church, the porch, the Lyceum, and the academy, furniſh only imaginary notions. If you would attain realities, you are obliquely referred to the brothel, the gaming-table, and to all the haunts of avarice, fraud, and vicious pleaſure. Theſe, ſay they, are the ſchools in which man is deſcribed as he really exiſts; and in theſe the knowing part of mankind ſeek and find that wiſdom, which is vainly ſought by fools in the church or in the library.

It is true, that books do indeed repreſent things better than they are; but it is as true, that, in doing ſo, they do what they ought. It is their praiſe, and not their ſhame. They endeavour to raiſe human nature, and they ſucceed in the attempt; for, however bad the world may be, the extremes of wickedneſs are to be found among thoſe who do not read, not among thoſe who have been educated in the doctrines contained in the moral philoſophers; and whatever exalted excellence occurs in the world, is produced by thoſe

thoſe whoſe minds have been cultivated by moral inſtruction.

If things were to be deſcribed by the moraliſt merely as they are; if only ſuch precepts were to be given by him, as tend to teach the young mind how to deceive, and to practiſe thoſe vices which abound in the world, public degeneracy and corruption would certainly encreaſe to a degree which can hardly be conceived. Wretched indeed is man without the aſſiſtance of a moral guide, and wretched, and even infernal would be the ſtate of ſociety, if books were not continually employed in checking our precipitate courſe to moral degeneracy. We can hardly imagine what an appearance ſociety would aſſume, if books were precluded; becauſe we can never experience any thing like it in theſe ages, when ſcarcely an individual arrives at maturity without receiving ſome inſtruction, oral or written, derived from books.

I have myſelf heard it objected to the great Addiſon by men of the world, that they could not approve his writings, becauſe, as they ſaid, he labours to render man what he never can be. I will take upon me to aſſert, that, notwithſtanding this charge, more good has been done to the Engliſh nation by the lucubrations of Addiſon, than by the active labours of any one individual, however high his ſtation and powerful his influence. The Spectators are at this time every where read through the Britiſh empire, and much of the learning and the good qualities, which have appeared among us ſince their publication, has been derived from them. No books are more popular from the higheſt to the loweſt orders; and that the Britiſh nation is not ſunk to the level of its neighbours, is to be, in great meaſure, attributed to a book of moral inſtruction, in which things are repreſented better than they are, and the comparative dignity of human nature nobly vindicated.

It is from the erroneous idea, that very little advantage in the conduct of life is to be derived from books of moral inſtruction; that our Engliſh ſermons, which abound in the beſt morality, enforced in the moſt powerful manner, are almoſt univerſally neglected.

ed. They are bought by young divines for the uſe of the pulpit; but they are little read in the cloſet. An unconcerned ſpectator would be led to ſuſpect, that moſt men were inſincere, and that there ſubſiſted a tacit agreement between them to deceive and be deceived. For they, who attend to and applaud a ſermon as it is pronounced by the preacher from the pulpit, would bluſh to be found in their retirements with a volume of ſermons in their hands. If they really believed the matter of ſermons, it is of ſo very intereſting a nature, that they muſt be tempted to read them with avidity; but the ſame unfortunate idea prevails, that though the moral diſcourſe may ſerve in its proper place to amuſe an audience, it is not ſufficiently efficacious to be able to influence the conduct of life. It is conſidered as a matter of form, which very good ſort of people may attend to from motives of decency, and then return to their former conduct unaltered and unimproved.

The end which I have chiefly in view, in ſubmitting theſe remarks, is not only to recommend an attention to books and inſtructive diſcourſes, but to produce, if poſſible, an alteration in the ſcope and object of that attention. I wiſh readers to take up a book with a deſire to receive from it moral inſtruction, and not merely literary entertainment. Every one of us, whatever are our improvements, is liable to relax in his principles, unleſs they are frequently renewed and ſtrengthened by admonition. Fortunately for us, books of morality abound; and places, where inſtruction is given in the moſt ſolemn manner, and under the moſt awful ſanctions, are almoſt daily opened for our reception. But, alas! how few of us purchaſe and peruſe a book with a ſincere deſire to be rendered better men; and how many attend to the preacher ſolely to gratify our curioſity, and derive amuſement! Bad indeed muſt be the book and the ſermon, from which any man may not, if he will, receive ſome hint, which, when ſeriouſly reflected on, would lead to improvement. But our want of humility, and our idea that ſubjects, which concern our worldly intereſt and pleaſure, are the only ſubjects worthy the care of a

man

man of ſenſe, render all which the wiſeſt men have collected for our guidance utterly abortive.

What are the books which men in the exerciſe of power, and men of buſineſs, chiefly regard? Only ſuch as have a tendency to facilitate the mechanical parts of their ſeveral employments: poor and mean objects in compariſon with the ſublimity of objects moral and religious. Yet all others they are too apt to conſider as trifling and nonſenſical, ſerving indeed to fill up the time of thoſe who have nothing elſe to do, but not worth the notice of the man of ſenſe and of the world. From ſuch modes of thinking originate narrowneſs, illiberality, and ignorance, the fruitful parents of every vice which can render their poſſeſſor miſerable, and be injurious to ſociety.

No. XXVII. ON MODERN CRITICISM.

I Cannot help thinking, that the effect which a literary work is found to produce, is the beſt criterion of its merit; and that ſentiment or feeling, after all that has been urged by theoretical critics, is the ultimate and infallible touchſtone to appreciate with preciſion the works of taſte and genius. Theoretical criticiſm conſtitutes indeed a very ingenious ſpecies of writing; but, before I can be really pleaſed with a poem or a piece of oratory, I muſt feel its excellence. I may be convinced of the merit of a work by a ſeries of abſtruſe and metaphyſical argumentation, and yet, on reading it, find myſelf greatly diſappointed. There is indeed, in all works of true taſte and genius, ſomething of that elevated nature, which cannot be pointed out by verbal deſcription, and which can only be perceived by the vibrations it produces on the nervous ſyſtem.

The inference I mean to draw from this truth is, that they who have enjoyed the benefits of a good education, and improved their parts which were naturally good, may deſerve the praiſe of good critics, when they

they pronounce on a work, that it is good or bad, or make any particular remarks on its beauties and deformities, according to their feelings, even though they should not be able or inclined to give such subtle reasons for their judgment as have lately appeared in some very ingenious writings of this age.

Those readers will not deem this subject unnecessary, who are informed, that even Mr. Addison has been refused, in the present age, the name and the praise of a critic. "It must not be dissembled," says Dr. Hurd, "that criticism was, by no means, his talent. "His taste was truly elegant; but he had neither that "vigour of understanding, nor chastised philosophical "spirit, which are so essential to this character. For "what concerns his criticism on Milton in particular, "and as to his own proper observations, they are for "the most part so general and indeterminate, as to "afford but little instruction to the reader, and are "not unfrequently altogether frivolous." But Addison is censured in good company, even with Bouhours and Longinus.

Some men are distinguished by a superior sensibility and a delicacy of taste, others for an acute and logical understanding; those are formed to excel in criticism, the others in philosophy. The provinces are separate; and it must be allowed, that philosophy has oftener invaded the province of criticism, than criticism of philosophy. Philosophy may indeed derive much and valuable matter from philology; but she will assimilate it to herself, and the whole will be still philosophy. She must still allow criticism to judge by a test the least fallible, when applied to works of imagination and sentiment, the genuine feelings of improved and cultivated nature. I would compare an abstruse philosopher, when he considers the works of genius, to an anatomist, who will not pronounce a human body perfect and beautiful till he has examined its internal conformation; while the man of taste may be said to resemble a sensible spectator, who at first sight, and without any laborious investigation, pronounces a figure graceful in its symmetry, shape, and colour.

What then, it will be aſked, is criticiſm to be left for ever vague and indeterminate, and is there no ſtandard of taſte? I anſwer, that the feelings of the majority of men coinciding for a number of years in the ſame object, conſtitutes a ſtandard ſufficiently certain and uniform. Men are ſo like each other in the conſtituent principles of their minds, that the work, which has pleaſed the greater part during a long time, will pleaſe the whole, if their minds were properly cultivated, and will pleaſe them for ever. And, as to accidental differences in opinion, or deviations from this ſtandard, they are only the characteriſtic irregularities, which attend every thing ſublunary, and have no evil conſequence on the general opinions. The perſons who entertain them are pleaſed with their error; and, after all that has been ſaid with an air of importance, errors in matters of taſte are ſeldom injurious either to individuals or to ſociety.

In truth, I think the philoſophers arrogate too much, when they allow none but themſelves to give ſentence on the merit of a work. A polite and claſſical ſcholar, who has not immerſed himſelf in the profundities of modern metaphyſics, is, in my opinion, completely qualified for the office of a critic. If, after reading a book, he pronounces, from the general effect of it on his ſentiments, that it is good or bad, ſolid or ſuperficial, elegant or vulgar, ſublime or low; and, if the ſentence he pronounces is afterwards, or has already been confirmed by the public voice, that ſcholar is a critic. And, indeed, ſuch criticiſm is far more valuable to the generality of readers, to ſerve and enlighten whom ought to be the ſcope of every writer, than ſpeculative refinements.

At the ſame time, I would by no means diſparage the admirable works of Ariſtotle. I have been delighted with the philoſophical criticiſm of many writers of North Britain, and with the beautiful illuſtrations of ancient critics and philoſophers, given to the world by a Hurd and a Harris. All I mean to contend for is, that writers of this order ſhould not depart from their proper ſphere, that of philoſophy; and, from a kind

kind of literary luſt of dominion, extend their empire over that agreeable ſort of criticiſm, which has delighted and improved ſo many readers, and which has appeared ſo charming in the works of Longinus, Bouhours, and Addiſon.

As a vindication of Addiſon, I will cite the words of his late penetrating biographer. "Before," ſays he, "the profound obſervers of the preſent race re-"poſe too ſecurely on the conſciouſneſs of their ſupe-"riority to Addiſon, let them conſider his Remarks on "Ovid, in which may be found ſpecimens of criti-"ciſm ſufficiently ſubtle and refined; let them peruſe "likewiſe his Eſſays on Wit, and on the Pleaſures of "Imagination, in which he founds art on the baſe of "nature, and draws the principles of invention from "diſpoſitions inherent in the mind of man, with ſkill "and elegance, ſuch as his contemners will not eaſily "attain."

I have introduced theſe remarks with an intention to vindicate the liberty of readers and writers, who really might fear to give their opinions in general terms on the merit of a work, or a paſſage of it, while their remarks, unaccompanied with a formal and abſtruſe diſquiſition, might be in danger of receiving the contemptuous epithets of frivolous and ſuperficial: epithets which writers ingenious indeed, but too much attached to metaphyſical refinement, have ventured to beſtow on that ornament of letters and of mankind, the chief writer in the Spectator: an author, whoſe criticiſms will live and flouriſh, when the dry ſpeculations which cenſure them ſhall fall to decay, and be as if they had never been.

And with reſpect to the value and utility of thoſe very ſubtle diſquiſitions in criticiſm, which have diſtinguiſhed the preſent age of literature, we may perhaps collect an idea of the degree in which we ought to eſtimate them, if we attend to the advice of a very judicious writer.

"I would adviſe," ſays a great philologiſt, "a "beginner in this elegant purſuit, the ſtudy of cri-"ticiſm, to avoid ſubtle and far-fetched refinement,

"which,

" which, as it is for the moſt part adverſe to perſpi-
" cuity and truth, may ſerve to make an able ſophiſt,
" but never an able critic."

No. XXVIII. ON THE PERIODICAL ESSAYISTS.

I AM not in the number of thoſe politicians, who eſtimate national good merely by extent of territory, richneſs of revenue, and commercial importance. I rather think that pure religion, good morals, fine taſte, ſolid literature, and all thoſe things, which, while they contribute to elevate human nature, contribute alſo to render private life dignified and comfortable, conſtitute that true national good, to which politics, war, and commerce, are but ſubordinate and inſtrumental. Indeed, one cannot always ſay ſo much in their praiſe; for, after all the noiſe which they make in the world, they are often injurious to every thing, for which ſociety appears, in the eye of reaſon to have been originally inſtituted.

Under this conviction, I cannot help thinking, that ſuch writers as an Addiſon and a Steele have cauſed a greater degree of national good than a Marlborough and a Walpole. They have ſucceſsfully recommended ſuch qualities as adorn human nature, and ſuch as tend alſo, in their direct conſequences, to give grandeur and ſtability to empire. For, in truth, it is perſonal merit and private virtue, which can alone preſerve a free country in a proſperous ſtate, and indeed render its proſperity deſirable. How are men really the better for national proſperity, when, as a nation grows rich, its morals are corrupted, mutual confidence loſt, and debauchery and exceſs of all kinds purſued with ſuch general and unceaſing ardour, as ſeduces the mind to a ſtate of abject ſlavery and impotence? If I am born in a country, where my mind and body are almoſt ſure to be corrupted by the influence of univerſal example, and my ſoul deadened in all its nobler energies, what avails

avails it, that the country extends its dominion beyond the Atlantic and the Ganges? It had been better for me that I had not been born, than born in such a country.

Moralists, therefore, who have the art to convey their instruction successfully, are the most valuable patriots, and the truest benefactors to their country. And among these I place in the highest rank, because of the more extensive diffusion of their labours, the successful writers of periodical lucubrations.

Among these, the Tatler is the first in the order of time, who will claim attention. For those which preceded were entirely political and controversial, and soon sunk into oblivion, when the violence of party which produced them had subsided. But the general purpose of the Tatler, as Steele himself declares, was to expose the false arts of life, to pull off the disguises of cunning, vanity, and ostentation, and to recommend a general simplicity in our dress, discourse, and behaviour. A book written with this purpose was sure to survive the transitory productions of polemic and political virulence.

Steele has mixed politics with morality; and, indeed, many of the first papers were of so heterogeneous a composition, that, while an attempt was made to please all tastes, there was scarcely matter sufficient in quantity of the same kind to satisfy any one. The mixture of news and politics would be disapproved in this age; but, at that time, they served to allure common readers, who could scarcely, by any other means, have been enticed to give attention to subjects of taste and morality.

The papers soon acquired new lustre by the co-operation of Addison. Addison eclipsed Steele; but yet I cannot sufficiently admire the generosity of Steele, and his freedom from jealousy and envy. He felt Addison's superiority; but it seems to have excited no other emotions but gratitude and admiration. "This "good office he performed," says he, speaking of the assistance which Addison gave him, "with such force "of genius, humour, wit, and learning, that I fared "like a distressed prince who calls in a powerful "neighbour

"neighbour to his aid: I was undone by my auxili-
"ary." Addiſon, indeed, added gravity and dignity to the work, which has conferred on it a permanent value. The levity and the motley manner of Steele would not have entitled him to the attention of a ſucceeding age, though it might have pleaſed in his own day by its novelty.

The general ſtate of converſation and of literary improvement among thoſe who called themſelves gentlemen, at the time in which the Tatler was written, was low and contemptible. The men, who from their rank, fortune, and appearance, claimed the title of gentlemen, affected a contempt for learning, and ſeemed to conſider ignorance as a mark of gentility. The Tatler gradually opened their underſtandings, and furniſhed matter for improving converſation. It not only gave them information on the particular topics on which it treated, but alſo, by leading them to think on all that paſſed before them, in a ſimilar manner, inſenſibly ſuperinduced a habit of ingenious and philoſophical reflection. There was no longer a neceſſity of invariably recurring to politics; a ſubject, which is in its nature contentious, and often tends to ſour the milk of human kindneſs. Indeed, it is ſaid, that to divert the attention of the nation from political ſubjects, was one principal motive for the publication of the Tatler and Spectator. Whatever was the motive, the reſult was highly beneficial to the nation at large, and is felt in its influence at this hour. Steele, though he was excelled by ſubſequent writers, deſerves all that fame and gratitude which is due to the firſt projectors of every important inſtitution.

Addiſon, who had appeared with peculiar luſtre in the Tatler, was to ſhine again in the Spectator with ſtill brighter and more permanent glory. The great charm of his diction, which has delighted readers of every claſs, appears to me to be a certain natural ſweetneſs, eaſe, and delicacy, which no affectation can attain. Truths of all kinds, the ſublime and the familiar, the ſerious and the comic, are taught in that peculiar ſtyle, which raiſes in the mind a placid and equable flow of emotions; that placidneſs and equability,

lity, which are in a particular manner adapted to give permanency to all our pleaſurable feelings. A work, which warms our paſſions, and hurries us on with the rapid vehemence of its ſtyle, may be read once or twice with pleaſure; but it is the more tranquil ſtyle which is moſt frequently in uniſon with our minds, and which, therefore, on the tenth repetition, as Horace ſays, will afford freſh pleaſure. Addiſon rejected that levity and medley of matter, which often appeared diſadvantageouſly in a ſingle paper of the Tatler, and uſually wrote regular treatiſes on the moſt important and moſt intereſting ſubjects of taſte and morality. Such ſubjects will never be out of date; but the ſtrictures on the dreſſes and diverſions of the times, whatever merit they poſſeſſed, could not have rendered the work immortal. There are, indeed, many papers of very moderate merit; but it could not be otherwiſe, when the publication was daily, and the whole number conſiderably more than half a thouſand. Neither Addiſon's other engagements, nor his abilities, great as they confeſſedly were, could have allowed him to compoſe every ſpeculation.

The Guardian has very properly been called a Continuation of the Spectator. Its plan and its execution are in reality the ſame, though the editor, as Steele may be called, intended a little variety in the original inſtitution. The inſtruction was intended to be conveyed in the character of a Guardian to the Lizard family; but the deſign was by no means conſiſtently ſupported. "The character of the Guardian," ſays a ſagacious writer, "was too narrow and too ſerious: it might "properly enough admit both the duties and the de-"cencies of life, but ſeemed not to include literary "ſpeculations, and was in ſome degree violated by "merriment and burleſque. What had the Guardian "of the Lizards to do with clubs of tall or of little "men, with neſts of ants, or Strada's proluſions?"

The Tatler, the Spectator, and the Guardian claim the firſt rank among the periodical writers, not only becauſe they led the way, which however is a great merit, but becauſe they poſſeſs ſuperior excellence, and have rendered that excellence moſt diffuſive in its effect, by a popular mode of diſplaying it. Their example, however,

however, has excited several followers, who have obtained and deserved a very illustrious reputation.

With respect to the Rambler, if I have prejudices concerning it, they are all in its favour. I read it at a very early age with delight, and, I hope, with improvement. Every thing laudable and useful in the conduct of life is recommended in it, often in a new manner, and always with energy, and with a dignity which commands attention. When I consider it with a view to its effects on the generality of the people, on those who stand most in need of this mode of instruction, it appears greatly inferior to the easy and natural Spectator. Those elegant and expressive words derived from the Latin, which are called by common readers hard words, and which abound in the Rambler, will prevent the greater number from entering on the perusal. And indeed, with all my prepossessions in favour of this writer, I cannot but agree with the opinion of the public, which has condemned in his style an affected appearance of pomposity. The constant recurrence of sentences in the form of what have been called triplets, is disgusting to all readers. But I will remind his censurers, that Cicero himself, in several of his works, fatigues the ear by a close of his periods almost uniformly similar. Not only the numbers, but the very words are frequently repeated in a few pages. I will also take the liberty to add in his defence, that the introduction of so many unusual and well-sounding words will gradually improve the English language, though it must necessarily circumscribe the writer's popularity. It seems, however, as if he himself recognized the fault of perpetual triplets in his style, since they are by no means frequent in his last productions.

The Adventurer is an imitation of the Rambler. It is written with remarkable spirit, and with the benevolent design of promoting all that is good and amiable. The stories make a very conspicuous figure in this work, and tend to diffuse its influence among those readers, who might probably have been deterred from reading it, had it consisted only of didactic discourses, written in a style approaching to the lexiphantic.

Triplets

Triplets were greatly in fashion when the Adventurer was published, and it is therefore no wonder that they abound in it. Great indeed are its merits in every view; but I cannot discover in the diction the sweetness and the delicacy of Addison.

The World is written in a style different from all the preceding. There is a certain gaiety and gentility diffused over it, which gives it a peculiar grace when considered only as a book of amusement. That it inculcates morality with any peculiar force, cannot be said. But it gives many valuable instructions, without assuming the solemn air of a severe moralist. The World appears to me, when compared with the Rambler and the Adventurer, like Horace when compared with Juvenal. The philosophy of the World is the philosophy of Aristippus.

The Connoisseur abounds in wit and a very pleasant species of humour. The book, however, is rather diverting than improving; yet, under the form of irony, many useful truths are conveyed with great success. There is no elevation of sentiment, and no sublime discourses on religion and morality; but there is a great deal of good sense expressed with good-humoured drollery. The authors were by nature possessed of wit, and had acquired a very considerable knowledge of the classics. The comic writers, such as Plautus and Terence, seem to have pleased them most, and they have rather undervalued the serious writers of morality. In one part of the twenty-seventh paper there is an oblique censure of the Rambler. "This new-fangled manner "of delivering our sentiments," says the Connoisseur, "is called writing sound sense; and, if I find this mode "seems likely to prevail, I shall certainly think it expe- "dient to give into it, and very suddenly oblige the "world with a Connoisseur so sensible that it will be "impossible to understand it."

Every one of these works is calculated to promote good sense and virtue; and whatever may be the defects of each, the variety of their manners is well suited to the variety of dispositions and tastes which occur in the mass of mankind. They have been found experimentally to improve life as well as conversation.

And,

And, with reſpect to the improvement of converſation, "nothing is ſo proper for this purpoſe," ſays the ſolid Johnſon in his preface to Addiſon's Poems, "as the "frequent publication of ſhort papers, which we read "not as ſtudy but amuſement. If the ſubject be "ſlight, the treatiſe likewiſe is ſhort. The buſy may "find time, and the idle may find patience."

No. XXIX. A CULTIVATED MIND IS NECESSARY TO RENDER RETIREMENT AGREEABLE.

FEW are able to bear ſolitude, and, though retirement is the oſtenſible object of the greater part, yet, when they are enabled by ſucceſs to retire, they feel themſelves unhappy. Peculiar powers and elegance of mind are neceſſary to enable us to draw all our reſources from ourſelves. In a remote and ſolitary village, the mind muſt be internally active in a great degree, or it will be miſerable for want of employment. But in great and populous cities, even while it is paſſive, it will be conſtantly amuſed. It is impoſſible to walk the ſtreets, without finding the attention powerfully ſolicited on every ſide. No exertion is neceſſary. Objects pour themſelves into the ſenſes, and it would be difficult to prevent their admittance. But in retirement, there muſt be a ſpirit of philoſophy and a ſtore of learning, or elſe all the fancied bliſs will vaniſh like the colours of the rainbow.

Poor Cowley might be ſaid to be melancholy mad. He languiſhed for ſolitude, and wiſhed to hide himſelf in the wilds of America. But, alas! he was not able to ſupport the ſolitude of a country village!

I lately paid a viſit to a friend, who has withdrawn from the hurry of buſineſs to enjoy the ſweets of a rural retirement in the ſouth of Wales. His houſe is ſituated on an eminence, which commands an agree-

able

able proſpect. At the bottom of his garden, which is laid out in a taſte peculiar to himſelf, yet entirely conformable to nature, runs a ſmall river, remarkable for the ſmoothneſs of its ſurface and the clearneſs of its water: but, though the houſe is perfectly agreeable in ſituation, ſome have thought that the freſhneſs of the air, the beauty of the ſcenery, and the ſilence of retirement, can by no means compenſate the want of a neighbourhood: for, to ſay the truth, there is not a ſingle houſe to be ſeen within a mile of my friend's little ſolitary villa, except one poor cottage, which is inhabited by his gardener.

Though I was at firſt, like the reſt, much diſpoſed to diſapprove the ſolitude of my friend's habitation; yet, when I had reſided with him a little while, and had enjoyed the calm and rational pleaſures of philoſophic eaſe, I became enthuſiaſtically fond of ſequeſtered life. It muſt, indeed, be confeſſed, that Hilario poſſeſſes ſome peculiar qualities neceſſary to render ſolitude agreeable. He has a natural ſweetneſs of temper, a refined taſte for literature and muſic, and, at the ſame time, ſome reliſh for the common diverſions of the country. But though he divides the greater part of his time in the alternate amuſements of his books, his harpſichord, his dogs and his horſes, yet is he never ſo happy as in the enjoyment of the converſation of a friend, whoſe manners and ſentiments are congenial with his own.

It muſt not be forgotten, that he derives much of his pleaſure from a knowledge of botany and natural philoſophy, which he acquired in the former part of his life. His acquaintance with theſe ſciences enables him to make great improvements in the cultivation of his garden, where almoſt every plant, which is curious, uſeful, or beautiful, is brought to its higheſt perfection.

It might perhaps be ſuppoſed from his ſequeſtered manner of life, that he is utterly unacquainted with the living world. He takes care, however, to inform himſelf of the topic of the day, by attending to periodical publications of repute and authenticity; and he is allowed to make moſt pertinent obſervations on the taſte,

taſte, manners, and politics of the preſent times. His remarks always have this peculiarity, owing perhaps to his diſtance from parties, that they favour of that liberal ſpirit, which marks the true gentleman and the citizen of the world.

The great evil of ſolitude is, that reaſon becomes weak for want of exerciſe, while the powers of imagination are invigorated by indulgence. The gloomy ideas of Popiſh ſuperſtition were derived from the cells of the monaſtery. Fanaticiſm and bigotry, melancholy and deſpair, have uſually been produced in the cave and the convent. Happy in a mind furniſhed with ideas of every kind, Hilario is never at a loſs for occaſions to exert the powers of his reaſon; and can, at all times, divert his imagination from the horrors of the ſpleen, by the pleaſing employments of literary purſuits.

The avocations of an active life ſhortened a viſit which I would gladly have protracted. I return to the engagements of the world, ſupported by the ſoothing expectation, that a time will come, when I ſhall be able to ſpend the evening of life in a ſweet retreat, like that of Hilario.

With a virtuous and cheerful family about one, with a few faithful and good-humoured friends, with a well-ſelected collection of elegant books, and with a competency, one may enjoy comforts even in the deſerted village, which the city, with all its diverſions, cannot ſupply.

No. XXX. ON AFFECTATION OF THE VICES AND FOLLIES OF MEN OF EMINENCE.

IT has frequently happened, that men, diſtinguiſhed by their genius, have, from an unſettled habit of life, from an affectation of ſingularity, or from uncommon warmth of conſtitution, neglected the common rules of prudence, and plunged themſelves into all the miſeries of vice and diſſipation. They who are

but

but slightly acquainted with the lives of our English writers, can recollect many instances of men of the brightest parts, whose lives, after an uninterrupted course of misery, have terminated under the pressure of want in the confinement of a gaol. They have been admired, and at the same time neglected; praised, and at the same time starved.

As the consequences of their imprudence are generally fatal, and generally known, a reasonable mind would scarcely believe, that any should be found ambitious of treading in their footsteps, when they err. Yet, such attraction has the brilliancy of literary reputation, that every witling, who pens a stanza, while he should be engrossing a deed, looking upon himself as a genius of uncommon magnitude, thinks it necessary, in order to complete his character, to plunge into the excesses of drunkenness and debauchery. When his follies have thrown him out of his profession, ruined his health, and shut him up in a prison, he consoles himself with reflecting, that he shares the same fate which the great wits, his predecessors, have suffered before him. He is happy even to be wretched with an Otway, a Dryden, or a Savage.

This unfortunate conduct is owing to a mistaken opinion, too generally adopted; that vice is the mark of laudable spirit, and that spirit is the characteristic of genius. Prudence, caution, common sense, are, in the idea of many, the concomitants of dulness. The phlegmatic disposition of a fool, say they, can guide him through life in the straight road of prudence; but the volatility of genius is continually tempted to turn out of the direct path to gather flowers on the sides, to view every pleasing prospect, and to discover new ways through unfrequented labyrinths.

But it may be a reasonable question, whether this propensity to deviation may not be a weakness, rather than a superior strength of mind; whether it is not sometimes the voluntary effect of pride and affectation; and whether it is not oftener caused by a restlessness of constitution, than by a more energetic activity, or an acuter perception. Sensibility of mind, and fineness of feelings, are always the attendants of true genius. These,

Theſe, which by themſelves conſtitute a good heart, when joined to a good head, naturally give a greater tendency to virtue than to vice: for they are naturally charmed with beauty, and diſguſted with deformity of every kind. Virtue, therefore, who is amiable in the eyes of her enemies, muſt have additional charms for thoſe whoſe ſuſceptibility of beauty is more delicate and refined; and Vice, who is naturally loathſome, muſt appear uncommonly odious to thoſe who are uncommonly ſhocked at every ſpecies of turpitude.

Nor want there inſtances to prove, that men of the moſt exalted genius can be men of the moſt unſpotted virtue. Addiſon, the glory of our nation, was only equalled in his abilities by his piety, by the purity of his morals, the integrity of his heart, and the prudence of his conduct. Pope was a man of exemplary piety and goodneſs. Gay, though licentious in his writings, is ſaid to have been uncontaminated by the vices of the world; and though inſtances are numerous on the other ſide, yet theſe few are ſufficient for the refutation of that prevalent notion, that great genius is incompatible with ſingular prudence and conſiſtent virtue.

The folly of thoſe who are only pretenders to genius, and who affect vice as eſſential to the character they aſſume, is as pitiable as it is ridiculous. Their egregious vanity will probably render all addreſſes to them uſeleſs: but they may take it as an infallible prediction, that dear-bought experience will ſoon induce them to wiſh they had altered their conduct, when it ſhall be too late to enjoy the benefits of an early amendment.

The fatal error of ſuppoſing vice the characteriſtic of ſpirit, has led many a parent to undo the child whoſe happineſs he moſt wiſhed to promote. The man of parts and faſhion ſends indeed his boy to ſchool; but cannot bear that he ſhould apply to books with any remarkable diligence, leſt he ſhould be miſtaken for a plodder; nor that he ſhould be ſingularly tractable and modeſt, leſt he ſhould be thought deficient in ſpirit; but ventures to form ſanguine hopes of his future eminence, if he is the ringleader of every riot, and is fortunate enough to gain at ſchool the appellation of a Pickle.

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Great writers have indeed indirectly patronized the cauſe of ſcepticiſm and immorality; but, if names are to have weight in this argument, to a Hume, a Rouſſeau, a Voltaire, we may confidently oppoſe, a Lowth, a Hurd, a Johnſon, and many more in the retired walks of literary life, whom every Virtue, as well as every Muſe, is proud to claim as her deſerving votary.

No. XXXI. ON THE INEQUALITIES OF GENIUS.

THE experience of every man, who has devoted himſelf to literature, will evince the truth of the remark, that there are times when the mind, however impelled by inclination, or urged by neceſſity, is incapable of ſubmitting to the confinement of application. The livelieſt imaginations, and the ſtrongeſt intellects, are ſometimes bewildered in dulneſs and ſtupidity, and a Homer nods with all the drowſineſs of a Bavius.

There are, in conſequence of the unequal power of exertion which the mind experiences, inequalities of excellence in every author, whether ancient or modern. The moſt admired productions have ſome parts, in which not only no merit is viſible, but which abound with faults. It can neither be ſuppoſed, that the failures ariſe from real and inherent inability, or that they are voluntary. Their authors acknowledged excellencies in other performances, will not admit the former; and their ſolicitude for the ſucceſs of their works muſt exclude the latter ſuppoſition. Such an effect can, therefore, be attributed to no cauſe, but the unaccountable inequalities of the fineſt genius, at different hours, and in different ſituations.

The Engliſh can boaſt a numerous train of writers, who, in their ſeveral departments, have approached very nearly to the ſtandard of perfection: but ſcarcely one of them can be named, whoſe works are not deformed

deformed by compositions utterly unworthy of him. It is hardly credible, that the author of Paradise Lost could have produced some of those sonnets which pass under his name, but which bear no mark of his genius. Dryden, who wrote the ode on Cæcilia's day, composed a set of wretched tragedies in rhyme; the ode was, indeed, dictated by genius, but the tragedies arose from no other inspiration than that of want.

In this point, as well as in many others, there is an exact analogy between the moral and literary world. It has long been the complaint of the experienced, that no human foresight, no prudence, can at all times ensure prosperity, and avert ill-fortune. Something still arises to baffle the counsels of the wise, and to counteract the intentions of the good. The Roman satirist has indeed asserted, that Fortune is a deity of our own creation, and that he, who submits to the guidance of prudence, needs not the interposition of any supernatural power; but experience proves the assertion to be rather the effusion of a rigid and affected philosophy, than the cool suggestions of well informed reason. The observation of a sacred moralist, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, is more agreeable to truth, and has been confirmed by the repeated testimony of some thousand years. Wisdom is often found guilty of folly, and ingenuity of error.

Of the fluctuation of mental vigour in the same individual, there is a remarkable instance in the great Newton. Of him it is said, that, in the advanced period of his life, he was unable to comprehend his own works. That understanding, which once penetrated far beyond the limits of the visible creation, became so debilitated, as to be incapable of retracing its own progress: a memorable instance of human infirmity, sufficient to humble pride, and silence envy.

As merit cannot always ensure success, even in the exertion of its peculiar excellence, so is it by no means certain of obtaining a good reception in the world: for history and experience furnish many examples to prove, that wealth and power are not the necessary consequences of wisdom and virtue. To be wise and virtuous,

virtuous, may be learned from an Epictetus; to be fortunate, from others.

It might indeed be ſuppoſed, that ſtrength of intellects, accuracy of judgment, and extenſive erudition, would either ſecure to themſelves good fortune, or would, at leaſt, be rewarded by the world; but it is an inconteſtible truth, that poets and philoſophers, of every age and every nation, have been almoſt as much diſtinguiſhed by their indigence, as their ingenuity. Poverty and poetry are almoſt ſynonymous, while the unerring experience of mankind has reduced it to a proverb, that "fools have fortune."

The inſufficiency of merit, and of honeſt endeavours, to the acquiſition of fame and fortune, has given occaſion to the diſcontented to repine, and to cenſure the œconomy of human affairs; but they, who are converſant in the inveſtigation of final cauſes, eaſily perceive, that ſuch a diſpenſation tends to perfect virtue, by the exerciſe of patience.

All ſublunary excellence is indeed tranſitory. Not only the external goods of fortune, but the mental advantages, which are commonly repreſented as out of the reach of accident, are ſubject to decay and perpetual fluctuation. They who labour to aſcend the heights of virtue and learning, often ſlide back in their paſſage, or fall at once from the ſummit when it is attained. If then neither wiſdom, knowledge, genius, nor virtue, are ſtable and ſtationary, we muſt learn not to confide in them with preſumptuous ſecurity, but to put our whole truſt, where alone it can repoſe without danger, *even on the rock of ages.*

No. XXXII. MEN OF GENIUS DO NOT ALWAYS EXCEL IN COMMON CONVERSATION. IN A LETTER.

WHEN you were with me laſt, I remember you expreſſed your ſurpriſe, that Varus, who has indubitable marks of true genius in his writings, appeared utterly deſtitute of ſpirit and vivacity in converſation. You ſeemed at a loſs to account for the dulneſs of a man, whoſe pages are replete with wit and humour; and you were aſtoniſhed to find, that he who had engaged in the deepeſt diſquiſitions with all the ſubtilty of argument, appeared unable to ſupport a trifling converſation on the common topics of the day. You did not perhaps recollect, that great minds can exert themſelves with full force only on great occaſions. Either from pride, diſuſe, or natural inability, poets and philoſophers are known to appear inferior in the arts of converſation, and the little decencies of common life, to the illiterate beau, and the ſuperficial female.

It has been ſaid, you know, that they who are employed in ſublime ſpeculations, learn to deſpiſe every ſubordinate object as unworthy their regard or cultivation. Where this is really the caſe, it is eaſy to account for the awkwardneſs of men of wit and letters; for it is impoſſible to beſtow pains in the acquiſition of what we deſpiſe: but your own, as well as my experience, will furniſh inſtances of thoſe who have thought it a misfortune not to be able to ſhine at the tea-table as well as in the ſchools. A man of this character, though he can trace a ſyſtem through all its mazes, is often incapable of expatiating on the common ſubjects of a new play, a new face, a new miniſtry, with tolerable accuracy or politeneſs.

One might naturally ſuppoſe, however, that when at laſt theſe exalted perſonages condeſcend to open their

their lips, ſomething uncommonly excellent would come out; but we often, in other inſtances as well as in this, indulge our expectations farther than reaſon and experience ſeem to juſtify. The greateſt men are ſtill but men, and, in the common intercourſe of life, are of neceſſity upon a level with the vulgar. I dare ſay, you remember a ſhrewd remark of a writer, whoſe name I cannot recollect, That no great man ever appeared great in the eyes of his *valet de chambre*. In truth, many objects in the moral, as well as natural world, ſeem larger when viewed imperfectly and obſcurely. The meteor which ſtrikes the diſtant beholder with fear and aſtoniſhment, is found, upon a nearer view, to be nothing but a vapour; and the philoſopher, who is the object of awe and veneration among thoſe who never approach him, becomes, when cloſely inſpected in the humble occupations of common life, little more than a common man.

Life has often been compared to a Drama, and the world to a Stage. I believe the ſubject we have been now conſidering will increaſe the reſemblance. Various indeed are the characters when they appear on the public Stage; but when they retire behind the ſcenes, and put off the glittering outſide which faſcinated beholders, the monarch, the hero, the philoſopher, are found in thoſe common weakneſſes which humiliate their aſpiring nature, to be more nearly on a level with the peaſant, than their pride is willing to allow.

It has been ſaid, that one man is capable of excelling others, in qualities ſuperinduced by his own efforts, as much as the ſpecies of man ſurpaſſes the ſpecies of brutes. This indeed is apparently true; yet he who expects to find the moſt improved individuals uniformly excellent, knows little of human nature. A Grandiſon is ſcarcely leſs fabulous than a Phœnix.

All ſorts of excellencies can never be united in one man. The world is unreaſonable when it expects, that they who write well ſhould always ſhine in the little arts of convivial intercourſe. It is enough, that their minds are engaged in ſubjects of importance, and that they are both able and willing to communicate their meditations to the Public. Few have written better

than Addiſon, yet Addiſon was remarkable for taciturnity. He was however, we are told, agreeable and talkative among ſelect friends and men of letters. In truth, converſation cannot be long ſupported with ſpirit, but among equals in point of abilities and attainments; and men of great genius and profound learning do not often meet their equals.

No. XXXIII. VERBAL CRITICISM UNDESERVEDLY DESPISED. IN A LETTER.

I Cannot help thinking you were too ſevere in what you ſaid againſt thoſe critics who have employed themſelves in verbal diſquiſitions. You well know, that ridicule can make things, of acknowledged utility, appear vain and frivolous. And to tell you the truth, I believe, you do not keep your exquiſite talent for ridicule under that reſtraint which candour and moderation ſeem to require.

I muſt indeed allow, that Verbal Criticiſm, like many other laudable purſuits, is apt to deviate into abſurdity, when not under the regulation of reaſon and good ſenſe. Enquiries into the works of nature are highly uſeful and pleaſing; but even theſe have been perverted by ignorance and bigotry, and have produced thoſe diſgraces of the human mind, alchemy and judicial aſtrology. Inveſtigations of the manners and inſtitutions of antiquity are known to promote knowledge, by aſcertaining ambiguous ſubjects, and to give pleaſure, by gratifying a natural curioſity; theſe however have likewiſe degenerated into all thoſe abſurdities which form the character of the pedantic antiquarian, and the trifling virtuoſo.

When you cenſure verbal critics, you certainly forget how much you are indebted to them. Believe me, you would never have had that general acquaintance with the claſſics, had you been obliged to toil through all thoſe difficulties, which the Commentators, at the revival of learning, took ſuch pains to remove. Reſcued from

from the cells of Monks, whose minds were as dark as their habitations, the manuscripts of ancient authors were full of errors and interpolations, and it was impossible to read a page of many celebrated writings without being embarrassed with obscurity and impeded by chasms, which collation or conjecture only could supply. You may laugh, if you please, at the phlegmatic disposition of those who could go through the drudgery of collating a dozen manuscript copies, to find the proper place of a conjunction or an adverb; yet, however merry you may be on the occasion, you will be obliged to acknowledge the utility of the labour. I am aware, that these pain-taking students have been stigmatized with appellations of the lowest kind, and that they have been called porters in the republic of letters, and their works, the scaffoldings of literature: but let it be remembered, that though the greatest share of praise be due to the architect, yet will his plans and models, however ingeniously formed, avail but little without the co-operation of the labourer, and the assistance of the scaffold.

But without insisting on the advantage derived from this kind of criticism, in the illustration of ancient authors, I think it evident, that it deserves cultivation, were it only because it contributes to ascertain, and to refine our own language.

If you review the state of Literature, you will find few writers who have attained an elegance in their own language, before it has been examined by grammarians, and reduced to fixed rules of analogy. Strength and vigour they may perhaps have displayed, since these are the genuine products of natural genius. But to the most animated sentiments, and nervous expressions, they have been unable to add the grace of a correct and polished style.

If then we make pretensions to taste, and prefer elegance to deformity, and perspicuity to confusion, we must not refuse, to verbal criticism, that praise which we readily bestow on the other parts of literature.

The world has long been prejudiced against compilers of Dictionaries, and has viewed them rather in the light of elaborate plodders, than of men of taste and

and genius; but candour muſt confeſs, that learning is more indebted to Dictionaries and Lexicons, than to any other production whatever; ſince, without theſe, the ancient writings, thoſe ſources of literature, muſt have remained unintelligible. The Engliſh language has been enriched by the Shakeſpeares, the Miltons, the Lockes of former times; but it may with truth be ſaid, to have been refined and embelliſhed by the grammarians and the great lexicographer of the preſent age. It is from the labours of verbal critics, that our language will receive the only excellences it wanted, purity and correctneſs.

No. XXXIV. ON THE NECESSITY AND METHOD OF ENCOURAGING IN THE COMMUNITY THE PREVALENCE OF VIRTUOUS LOVE.

THE paſſion of love poſſeſſes an influence on life ſo extenſive and important, that the moraliſt, who takes it not into conſideration, is guilty of a great omiſſion. Virtuous love is not only attended with the ſweeteſt pleaſures which this life affords, but is highly conducive to the improvement of human nature. Like the ſun in the ſpring, whoſe warmth calls forth the latent powers of vegetation, love excites and cheriſhes ſome of thoſe amiable diſpoſitions, which would otherwiſe have remained for ever in a concealed and a torpid ſtate. It often improves the underſtanding no leſs than the heart, and the transformation which Iphigenia is ſaid to have produced in Cymon, is neither unnatural nor uncommon.

But it ſeems to be a juſt complaint, that virtuous love is of late much leſs frequent than it has been, and than it ought to be. A very groſs paſſion, which uſurps the name of love, but which, inſtead of improving the heart or the faculties, degrades them both, is become more univerſal and more licentious.

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Where luſt and libertiniſm greatly prevail, the hearts of the people at large are too debauched to be able to entertain a virtuous paſſion for a ſingle object. Thus marriage is avoided as a reſtraint, or, if it is ſought, it is ſought from intereſt alone. But the greater part of women are not bleſt with the gifts of fortune. How then are they to be entered into a ſtate, for which God, and nature, and reaſon, and virtue, evidently deſigned them? Their whole dependence for nuptial felicity, and indeed for the accompliſhment of one great end of their exiſtence, muſt reſt on the power they poſſeſs of exciting a virtuous affection: a poor dependence according to the ſtate of morals in this age! for, with all the graces of perſonal beauty, and the ſuperior charms of delicacy and ſenſe, virtuous women will be ſlighted, and even deſpiſed, by the greater number of young men, who even glory in having blaſted the budding bloſſoms of love in the peſtilential air of a brothel, and who have ſacrificed thoſe firſt fine ſenſibilities, which return no more, to ſome infamous and impure proſtitute. So the roſe of beauty and of innocence blooms and decays unplucked. He who ſhould admire it, love it, and take it to his boſom, turns away to cull the noiſome weed which ſtings him while he touches it, and ultimately poiſons both his body and his mind.

I wiſh it were in the power of the moraliſt to reſtore the rights of female innocence and beauty, and to relume the lamp of virtuous love. The virtue and happineſs of both ſexes would be greatly augmented by ſuch an event. It ſeems, indeed, that it would be peculiarly favourable to female dignity, upon which the good morals of the world greatly depend. For whatever authority the men may claim, experience has uniformly proved, that the affairs of the world are in great meaſure regulated by the women. If their minds are properly improved, and their ſentiments duly exalted, the great influence they poſſeſs will be directed to promote all that can render life more dignified and comfortable. But if they unite in increaſing profligacy, or do not exert themſelves to oppoſe it, that profligacy will be extreme. They ſhould openly profeſs, not only to purſue virtue, and all that is laudable in themſelves,

themſelves, but to value the men moſt, who moſt excel in virtue and in laudable qualities. They may reſt aſſured, that, when they ceaſe to liſten to licentious love, they will be courted with all the ardour and idolatrous veneration of a pure and a virtuous heart. They will riſe in the ideas of the lover, and will appear to deſerve the epithet of angelic, which he now often beſtows on them merely in deriſion.

The neglected ladies may aſſure themſelves, that the mutual paſſion of the ſexes is too powerful to be overcome by any human art. But it may be ill directed, and taught to defeat its natural purpoſe. And here it muſt be confeſſed, that the rare appearance of virtuous love, and the neglect which virtuous women experience in this age, is in great meaſure derived from the increaſe of female proſtitution. Young men are allowed great liberties by the fooliſh indulgence of parents, and they cannot uſe thoſe liberties in walking the ſtreets, without being ſolicited to gratify and pall thoſe paſſions, which were meant to give ardour and perſeverance to a virtuous love. It is but too probable, that the majority will liſten to the ſyren ſong; and the very firſt debauch will take off that keen edge of ſenſibility which would have led to a virtuous connection. In vain is ſome beautiful, accompliſhed, and innocent creature, recommended to the young heir by his parents, and her own beauty and merit. He declares himſelf averſe from marriage. But why? From reaſon and principle? The truth is, that he has loſt his ſenſibilities in the haunts of vice, and will not marry till a rottenneſs of bones, and a diſſipation of fortune, have rendered a nurſe and a dowry deſirable. But had he never fallen into the ſnares of the proſtitute, he would have retained his natural affection, and could not have reſiſted youth, beauty, and elegance united. Some happy maid, who is now left to pine away in celibacy, would triumphantly have dragged the willing captive to the altar; but he has learned a degree of cunning in the regions of old Drury, which teaches him to defy beauty, and to deſpiſe the very idea of matrimony, but as it may tend to the augmentation of his fortune. With his cunning, he has probably

probably gained diſeaſes and debility, which are better adapted to raiſe a nauſea than conciliate affection. The inference I mean to draw from theſe remarks is, that the public good requires, that the vigilance of the magiſtrate ſhould be faithfully exerted in diminiſhing the number of proſtitutes. Inſtead of which it has been ſometimes inſinuated, that they are politically neceſſary.

I cannot help thinking alſo, that the reſtraints of law, which, through the interpoſition of avarice and ambition, have been laid on marriage, have greatly contributed to diſcourage virtuous love, and to promote debauchery. The marriage-act, it is ſaid, is juſtified by the example of foreign nations; but ſo alſo is arbitrary power, and there are few acts, which, in their nature and ſpirit, tend more to deſpotiſm than the marriage-act. But, omitting to conſider it in a political view, I ſhall view it for a moment as it affects the morals of the ſexes. Men marry, and ought indeed to marry, from the influence of love, as well as from the dictates of prudence. Let us then ſuppoſe the caſe of two young and virtuous perſons powerfully ſtruck with each other's agreeable qualities, and deeply in love. If they could be married without delay, and without a tedious attention to a variety of troubleſome and expenſive formalities, it is highly probable they would immediately marry. If they have not ſelf-command, the conſequences of being obliged to poſtpone a legal union are ſuch as terminate in ſhame and ruin. If they reſolve to go through all the forms of the marriage-act, and to wait years for the accompliſhment of their wiſhes, as poor human nature cannot conſiſtently keep alive any of its better paſſions during a very long time, the lover cools, or finds new objects, or learns to gratify his ſenſual appetites where no reſtraints are required. The maid is forſaken, and the lover corrupted. Had they been married, both might have been happy and uſeful members of ſociety. Marriage tends greatly to promote virtue of every ſort; not only as it furniſhes a lawful and natural mode of gratifying the paſſions, but as it calls forth induſtry, and renders a good character and the eſteem of others

desirable, because necessary to the support of a family. But though I will venture to assert, that the multiplication of restraints on the proper intercourse of the sexes naturally tends to promote an improper intercourse, since an intercourse there must be, yet I will add, that alterations in an act, in which the domestic happiness of every family in the kingdom is interested, should not take place, but after the coolest deliberation, and the testimony of long and decisive experience. Villains, there is no doubt, will avail themselves of a freedom from restraint, to allure the incautious female into matrimony, merely for the sake of her fortune, which will perhaps be expended in supporting a courtesan. Surely some precaution must be taken by human laws to prevent this cruel species of robbery. To rob a father of his child, and then to forsake or injure that child!—none but a father can feel the agonizing pang that rises on the reflection.

The best method of increasing virtuous love is to pay peculiar attention to the moral and religious education of both the sexes. Polite and learned accomplishments are often so attended to as to exclude the formation of virtuous principles. As to the education of girls, in particular, it has been severely, though truly said, that many of them are trained as if they were to be prostitutes by profession. They are often left unacquainted with œconomical management, or with any one art that can render them useful. The higher classes are totally at a loss even in the first management of their offspring; and it is not to be wondered at, if they, who know not how to be wives, are soon degraded to the rank of harlots. A proper education, consisting of moral, religious, literate, and œconomical instruction, cannot fail to make them set a due value on themselves, and to enable them to pursue the methods most consistent with their dignity and happiness. She who is taught to say her prayers, and to value the testimony of a good conscience, will at once be rendered a fitter object of virtuous love, and less inclined to encourage any other. She will be respected as well as loved, as capable of becoming a valuable wife,

and

and will be only not courted with the wantonneſs of tranſitory deſire merely as a miſtreſs.

The women, it muſt be owned, are in this age greatly their own enemies. It is a juſt complaint, that the men are leſs ſenſible of their beauty and accompliſhments than they ought to be. But it muſt be remembered, that ſuch is the nature of man, that he deſpiſes every good which is too obvious and too plentiful. The women have confeſſedly laid aſide *reſerve*. The men have, by a natural conſequence, ſuſpended their admiration. Eaſe and forwardneſs of addreſs, and exceſſive familiarity, are eſtabliſhed by the law of faſhion; and neglect and contempt follow by the law of nature. Woman was deſigned to be purſued, and not to purſue. A veil increaſes beauty, and reſerve increaſes and preſerves love by mixing it with reſpect. Where there is no reſpect, there is no virtuous love. What looks like it, is a devil in an angel's form, even luſt: an indelicate name indeed; but let it be remembered, that to beſtow good names on bad things is to give them a paſſport in the world, under a deluſive diſguiſe.

The underſtandings of women are in every reſpect equal to thoſe of men when equally cultivated. They muſt perceive themſelves greatly intereſted in diffuſing among the men the ardour and ſincerity of a virtuous love. Their underſtandings and hearts are both well able to accompliſh this great purpoſe. I offer only imperfect hints. The women will improve upon them, I hope, and ſhew their utility by giving them real efficacy. I doubt not but that, upon reflection, they will be as deſirous as they are able, to ſtop the progreſs of female corruption by means very different from the eſtabliſhment of polygamy.

Let the rights of nature be reſtored, and let her empire be bounded by no other reſtraints but thoſe which religion, reaſon, and experience have eſtabliſhed.

No. XXXV. HINTS TO THOSE WHO ARE DESIGNED FOR THE LIFE OF A GENTLEMAN WITHOUT A PROFESSION.

TO inherit an affluent fortune, and to be exempted from the vulgar cares of life, ſeems to be a lot peculiarly favourable to the advancement and the ſecurity of human happineſs. The greater number of men are compelled by neceſſity to proceed in the ſame road, without liberty to deviate or ſelect the objects of their attention; but the rich heir beholds the world, and all that it contains, placed like a plentiful feaſt before him, and appears to have little elſe to do, but to reach out his hand, and to take what he finds moſt agreeable to his taſte.

Such a lot is uſually envied; but it is really not happier than others. Providence is not ſo partial, as, on a firſt and a curſory view, it appears to be. It ſeems indeed to eſtabliſh a kind of equilibrium of happineſs. And experience evinces, that caprice, falſe delicacy, artificial wants, vanity, pride, covetouſneſs, and envy, uſually render the lives of the rich and unemployed, not in the leaſt more pleaſurable than the condition of the honeſt, healthy, and induſtrious poor.

It is however certain, that to inherit an independent fortune is in itſelf a noble privilege, and that it ought to be highly conducive to real enjoyment. I ſhall therefore beg leave to offer a few hints to thoſe, who are ſetting out in life with the diſtinguiſhed advantage of a rich inheritance. As all the real benefit of ſuch a condition depends on the judicious uſes of it, if the moraliſt can point out means to ſecure that point, he may be ſaid to contribute more to the improvement of the young man's eſtate, than if he procured a ſubſcription to a loan, or put him in a way to make ten *per cent.* of his money.

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In the first place, I hope the young man will not be so mistaken in his ideas of happiness as to imagine, that he can be happy in doing nothing. Universal and unvaried experience has proved, that he who does nothing is a wretch. The same experience has declared it probable, that he will not only be miserable but wicked.

He must resolve to render himself useful on two accounts: first, because it is a duty he owes the community in return for the protection of his property; and, secondly, because it is a duty he owes to himself to be as happy as possible: and this cannot be, notwithstanding all the real and pretended gratifications of riches, without useful activity. It will not be enough to make him sleep with tranquillity, merely to have dressed well, to have danced at a ball, presided at a horse-race, or driven a phaeton. Riding a shewy horse, whipping a pair of low geldings from a high four-wheeled chaise, and sauntering in a stable, are indeed, in the present age, some of the most glorious methods of spending the sprightly days of youth, when privileged by the early possession of a fortune, But when I see the phaeton whisking by, and the lazy youth lolling on its side, I cannot help thinking the man at the tail of the plough a more useful, happy and respectable member of society. There is not, indeed, the least impropriety in these pleasures, when pursued merely as a temporary relaxation; but all, who know any thing of the world, will agree with me, that young men of fortune usually, in these times, make grooms their companions, a stable their study, and the driving a horse, or a pair of horses, the utmost extent of their activity, as a high phaeton, is the summit of their ambition.

But what, says the young heir, have I to do but to amuse myself? I have no trade, no profession, nor any necessity for either. Why may I not divert myself with any trifle which can excite my attention? But are you sure, I will ask in return, that you have no necessary employment, to the performance of which, according to your abilities, you are as much obliged by duty, reason, honour, and conscience, as the labourer

bourer is bound to finiſh the work for which he is hired? I believe I can point out ſome laudable occupations, in which you ought to engage, and in compariſon of which, the driving of a phaeton, the vanity of dreſs, and ten thouſand other vanities, will appear as the playthings of an infant.

The firſt object of a youth, who poſſeſſes affluence acquired by his forefathers, ſhould be the improvement of his mind. Without this, young man, whatever may be your money, and whatever your titles, if you have any, you will be a poor, mean, contemptible, and pitiful creature. You muſt read; you muſt ſelect your reading with judgment, and reflect upon it with long and ſerious attention. You muſt acquire a taſte for moral philoſophy, and learn to curb your overbearing inſolence, and all other irregularities of your temper and your paſſions. For it is a ſhame to make uſe of your riches and your grandeur merely to aſſume a licence for degrading yourſelf to a brute. You muſt, in a word, have a liberal education; an education not only liberal in name, but really polite, learned, and comprehenſive. You will find your nature raiſed by it, and yourſelf become a ſuperior being, in compariſon with what you would have been without it. It will exalt you more than a ducal coronet. In conjunction with wealth or honours, or both, it will render you the bleſſing and the glory of your country. Remember alſo, that, if you ſlight religion, that Providence which gave you riches, will puniſh your ingratitude by rendering them a curſe.

After a youth ſpent in preparation, in the ſtudy of the claſſics, of moral and natural philoſophy, and in the correction of the temper and the diſorders of the paſſions, it will be time to enter on the proper employments of a mature age. You will very laudably deſire to have a ſhare in the legiſlation; you will take upon you the office of a juſtice of peace; you will be ready at all times to ſit in judgment on the deareſt rights of your countrymen as a juryman; you will willingly aſſume the office of guardian to public charities, inſpector of public works, giving your time and your preſence for the public benefit: a gift often more

valuable

valuable than a pecuniary benefaction. You will uſe your influence to enquire into and to correct abuſes of truſt, to remove nuiſances, to improve roads, to build bridges, to repair public buildings, and to encourage all works of public ornament and utility.

Theſe may conſtitute your public employments. You have many of a private nature ſcarcely leſs neceſſary. I would recommend it to you to live, if not the whole year, yet all that part of it which is not neceſſary to be ſpent near the ſenate houſe, on your own eſtate in the country. Condeſcend to look into your affairs, and into all the more important matters of œconomy yourſelf. This will employ you well, and will prevent injuſtice to your tradeſmen, and embarraſſment to yourſelf and your offspring. It will prevent that ruin, which, at this time, ſtalks over the land, and diffuſes deſolation. You will ſtudy to improve agriculture: a delightful employment, and capable of producing great advantages, ſince agriculture has long been in the hands of thoſe, who, from the obſtinacy of ignorance, oppoſe all attempts to introduce new methods of cultivation. You will adorn your grounds with plantations, and not forget to drop the acorn, which is to ſupply your country with her future bulwarks.

You will adopt ſomething of the old Britiſh hoſpitality. You will, indeed, do right to ſelect your gueſts; for indiſcriminate hoſpitality tends only to promote gluttony and diſcourage merit. Men of learning, and all good men, for your own ſake and for theirs, ought to claim your excluſive favour. Let your feaſts be feaſts where the mind, as well as the palate, may be delighted. Diſcountenance the profligacy of your neighbours by the ſilent but powerful reproof of neglect. Be not carried away by the faſcination of faſhion and grandeur, but love and cheriſh merit in all its obſcurities.

Free from all profeſſional avocations, you will have ample leiſure to attend to your family; a field well fitted for the diſplay of the beſt virtues and moſt valuable qualities. Every family is a little community, and he, who governs it well, ſupports a very noble character, that of the *paterfamilias*, or the patriarch.

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The proper management of the various tempers and diſpoſitions which compoſe large families, the reformation of abuſes, the correction of errors, the teaching of duties, will by themſelves claim a conſiderable ſhare of your time and attention. But, if you have many children, you need never want employment. The care and inſtruction of them, in all the various duties and departments, might very honourably fill a life. You muſt beware of falling into a common and fatal error among the favourites of fortune, that of thinking domeſtic pleaſures, cares, and duties, beneath their attention.

Though you have no appointed profeſſion, let your aſſumed profeſſion be to do good, of every ſort and in every degree, as far as you are able. The world abounds with evil, moral, natural, real, and imaginary. He alone who does all he can, wherever his influence extends, to mitigate and remove it, is the *true gentleman.* Others are only eſquires, knights, baronets, barons, viſcounts, earls, marquiſes, dukes, and kings.

No. XXXVI. THE WANT OF PERSONAL BEAUTY A FREQUENT CAUSE OF VIRTUE AND HAPPINESS.

IT has been juſtly ſaid, that no one ever deſpiſed beauty who poſſeſſed it. It is, indeed, a noble privilege to be able to give pleaſure, wherever one goes, merely by one's preſence, and without the trouble of exertion. The reſpect which is paid to beauty, and the recommendation it gives to all our good qualities, are circumſtances ſufficiently advantageous to render the perſon, who has been bleſt with it, ſincerely grateful.

But the majority of mankind, if they are not deformed, are yet not beautiful. And this is a wiſe and benevolent diſpenſation of Providence; for, notwithſtanding

ſtanding the pretenſions of beauty, I am convinced, that the want of it is attended with great benefit to ſociety. Man is naturally deſirous of rendering himſelf, in ſome reſpect, valuable and amiable; and, if he has nothing external to recommend him, will endeavour to compenſate his defect by the acquiſition of internal excellence. But that the virtues of the heart, and the abilities of the underſtanding, contribute much more to public benefit than any corporeal accompliſhment, is a truth which needs no illuſtration.

It is indeed a well-known fact, that the beſt poets, philoſophers, writers, and artiſts, have been of the number of thoſe who were, in ſome meaſure, prevented in their youth from indulging idleneſs and profligacy, either by ſome conſtitutional infirmity, or by the want of thoſe perſonal graces, which are the greateſt allurements to a life of diſſipation. Among a thouſand inſtances, in confirmation of this truth, I will ſelect that of Pope; to the deformity and imbecility of whoſe body we may attribute his early and conſtant application to poetry. Where there are powerful ſolicitations to the pleaſures of ſenſe, very little attention will be paid to the pure delights of the mind.

But it is more particularly my deſign to point out ſome advantages attending the want of beauty in women: a want which will always be conſidered by them as a misfortune. But all misfortunes admit of conſolation; and many of them, under a judicious conduct, may be metamorphoſed into bleſſings. But while I conſider the advantages attending the want of perſonal charms, I muſt not be underſtood to undervalue beauty. If we admire the lifeleſs works of art, much more ſhould we be delighted with the living feature, in which are united ſymmetry and expreſſion. It is nature's command that we ſhould be charmed with her productions, both animate and inanimate; and our hearts are moſt willingly obedient when ſhe bids us admire beauty in our own ſpecies. Taſte, fancy, and affection, are then all at once moſt powerfully aſſaulted, and it would be as unnatural as it is in vain to reſiſt, by refuſing our admiration.

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But after our admiration is over, we ſhall find, when we exerciſe our reflection and judgment, what experience has indeed often proved, that plain women are the moſt valuable. It may appear paradoxical, but I will aſſert it to be true, that plain women are uſually found, as the companions of life, the moſt agreeable. They are indeed for the moſt part, I do not ſay always, the beſt daughters, the beſt wives, the beſt mothers; moſt important relations, and moſt honourable to thoſe who ſupport them with propriety. They who aim not at ſuch characters but live only to diſplay a pretty face, can ſcarcely rank higher than a painted doll, or a blockhead, placed with a cap on it, in a milliner's window.

There is ſomething of an irritability in the conſtitution of women whoſe minds are uncultivated, which, when increaſed by oppoſition, and confirmed by habit, uſually produces a termagant, a ſhrew, or a virago: characters which, from the torment they occaſion, may be ſaid greatly to participate of an infernal nature. Nothing but reading, reflection, and indeed what is called a liberal education, can in general ſmooth this natural aſperity. A woman who, by attending to her face, is led to neglect the mind, and who, beſides, has been flattered in her youth by the admirers of her beauty, ſeldom fails, in the more advanced periods of her life, to vent the virulence of her temper, now ſoured and blackened by neglect, on all who have the misfortune to approach her. Her huſband, if ſhe has peradventure entangled ſome miſerable wight, undergoes ſuch torments as might juſtly reſcue him from purgatory, by the plea of already having ſuffered it.

But folly and ignorance are almoſt as pregnant with domeſtic miſery as a bad temper. And how ſhall ſhe avoid folly and ignorance, with all their train of whims, ficklenes, fears, falſe delicacies, vanity, pride, affectation, envy, peeviſhneſs, fretfulneſs, childiſhneſs, and *weakneſs of nerves*, who has ſpent all the days when ſhe was young, and all the days ſhe thought herſelf young, at her toilette, and under the hands of the friſeur? She found herſelf admired wherever ſhe went, without

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ſaying or doing any thing admirable. She has therefore ſaved herſelf the trouble of forming a taſte for reading, or a habit of thinking. But beauty is a roſe which ſoon withers. She loſes the power of pleaſing others; and, alas! poſſeſſes none to pleaſe herſelf, which can ſupply the place of flattery and pretended adoration. As her life began and continued in folly, ſo it ends in miſery. If ſhe married, ſhe was uſeleſs at leaſt, and probably tormenting to her huſband. If ſhe continued unmarried, ſhe poſſeſſed few qualities to render her acquaintance ſolicited, and none that could afford her a rational amuſement in ſolitude.

It may indeed happen, that a beautiful woman may be educated with uncommon vigilance, that ſhe may poſſeſs a remarkably good underſtanding, and as good a diſpoſition. In this caſe, her beauty will be doubly valuable, not only from its real excellence when combined with a cultivated underſtanding, but from the difficulty of attending to the graces of the mind amidſt the cares of the perſon, and the flattery of fooliſh admirers. It is certainly poſſible, that a beautiful woman may be as accompliſhed as a plain woman, and I know that, in this age, there are many inſtances of it; but I am ſpeaking of probabilities; and I think it much more probable, that plain women will be, in general, better furniſhed with thoſe two neceſſary ingredients to domeſtic happineſs, a corrected temper, and a cultivated underſtanding.

Let us ſuppoſe a caſe, for the ſake of exemplifying the ſubject, and let it be ſomething like the following. A young lady, whoſe perſon is plain, cannot help obſerving how much ſhe is neglected at public aſſemblies, and what univerſal attention is paid to beauty. She will naturally feel a deſire to partake of the reſpect. She revolves in her mind the moſt likely methods of accompliſhing her purpoſe. As to her features and ſhape, it is in vain to think of altering them. She muſt draw her reſources from her mind and her temper. She will ſtudy to collect ideas, in order to render her converſation agreeable. She will therefore read, and obſerve, and reflect, and remember. Her eager deſire to gain eſteem will ſtimulate her induſtry, and give

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ſteadineſs to her application. With theſe ſhe cannot fail to ſucceed. Her mind will be ſtored with knowledge, which will produce itſelf in converſation with all the graces of eaſe and elegance. The improvement of her mind will have a natural effect in the improvement of her temper; for every part of polite learning tends to ſoften and harmonize the diſpoſition. But ſhe will alſo pay particular attention to the regulation of her temper; for ſhe will juſtly argue, that envy and ill-nature will add diſtortion and uglineſs to a ſet of features originally not worſe than plain or indifferent. She will ſtudy to compenſate her defects, not only by rendering herſelf intelligent and good tempered, but uſeful. She will therefore ſtudy the practical parts of domeſtic œconomy; thoſe parts of humble but valuable knowledge, with which a fine lady, with a fine face, would ſcorn to meddle, leſt ſhe ſhould be defiled. Thus ſenſible, good tempered, and uſeful, her company would be ſought by men of ſenſe and character; and, if any one of them ſhould be diſpoſed to marry, I have little doubt but that ſhe would be his choice, in preference to a mere beauty, who has ſcarcely one excellent or uſeful quality to render her a good wife, mother, and miſtreſs of a family.

Suppoſe our plain lady married. Her gratitude will be powerfully excited in return for the preference given to her amidſt ſo many others who are talked of, and toaſted, and admired. All her attention will be beſtowed in making the man happy, who has made her happy in ſo flattering a manner. Her underſtanding has been enlightened, and her temper ſweetened by her own exertions. She will therefore be an entertaining as well as tender and affectionate companion. She has been accuſtomed to ſolid pleaſures, for her plain perſon ſecluded her from vanity. She therefore ſeeks and finds comfort at home. She is not always wiſhing to frequent the places of public amuſement, but thinks the day happily cloſed, if ſhe can look back and find no domeſtic duty omitted.

Suppoſe her a mother. As ſhe has furniſhed herſelf with ideas, ſhe will be able to impart them to her children. She will teach them to entertain a proper knowledge

knowledge of the world, and not lead them, by her example, to admire only its vanities. She will be able to educate her daughters completely, and to initiate and improve her ſons. In the mean time, the fine lady, who has been taught to idolize her own face, and to doat on vanity, will neither be able nor willing to intereſt herſelf in ſuch diſagreeable matters as the care of her noiſy children, whom ſhe almoſt deteſts, ſince they make her look old as they grow up, and are an impediment to her extravagance and diſſipation. At the age of thirty or forty, whether of the two is the more amiable? Who now takes notice of the plain lady's face, or the handſome lady's beauty? The plain lady, in all probability, is eſteemed, and the handſome lady pitied or deſpiſed. But this is not all; for the one is happy and uſeful, the other burthenſome and miſerable.

Juvenal, in his celebrated ſatire on the vanity of human wiſhes, laments that the accompliſhment of our wiſhes would often be the cauſe of our deſtruction, and that ſuch are our prayers, that, if heaven were always propitious, it would often be unkind. Who wiſhes not beauty in his children? Yet beauty has been the bane of myriads, whom deformity might have ſaved from ruin, and rendered uſeful, happy, and reſpectable.

I have thus attempted, in this paper, to conſole that very worthy part of the ſex, who have not to boaſt the fineſt tincture of a ſkin, nor the moſt perfect ſymmetry of ſhape and features, and who are often not only neglected, but even ridiculed by the unfeeling man of pleaſure. It is ſurely a comfortable reflection, that, though nature has treated their perſons rather rudely, her apparent malignity may be turned to a benefit; and that a very plain ſyſtem of features may really be the cauſe of rendering them more engaging, and more permanently happy, as well as better able to communicate happineſs, than the moſt celebrated toaſt, whoſe mind is unimbelliſhed. She indeed may ſhine a little while in the faſhionable ſphere, while ſhe exhibits the tranſitory gloſs of novelty, but ſoon drops her honours, like the gaudy tulip, and is no more remembered.

No. 37.

No. XXXVII. ON AN EXCESSIVE AND INDISCRIMINATE LOVE OF COMPANY, AND AN ABHORRENCE OF OCCASIONAL SOLITUDE.

THERE are few conditions leſs deſirable than that of the man who has no reſources in himſelf, and who is totally dependent on others for his daily amuſement. Yet there are great numbers who conſider ſolitude as ſynonimous with miſery, and who are ready to aſſociate with any company, rather than be left alone. This weakneſs, for a great weakneſs it is, renders the mind baſe and mean enough to ſubmit to any neglect, coolneſs, or contempt, in order to be admitted into a party, or not to be excluded from a dinner. It is the cauſe and the conſequence of a feveriſh and reſtleſs ſtate, totally inconſiſtent with ſolid comfort and rational enjoyment.

The love of company and of ſocial pleaſures is indeed quite natural, and is attended with ſome of the ſweeteſt ſatisfactions of human life; but, like every other love, when it proceeds beyond the limits of moderation, it ceaſes to produce its natural effect, and terminates in diſguſtful ſatiety. The foundation-ſtone and the pillar, on which we build the fabric of our felicity, muſt be laid in our own hearts. Amuſement, mirth, agreeable variety, and even improvement, may be ſometimes ſought in the gaiety of mixed company, and in the uſual diverſions of the world; but, if we found our general happineſs on theſe, we ſhall do little more than raiſe caſtles in the air, or build houſes on the ſand.

To derive the proper pleaſure and improvement from company, it ought to be ſelect, and to conſiſt of perſons of character, reſpectable both for their morals and their underſtandings. Mixed and undiſtinguiſhed ſociety tends only to diſſipate our ideas, and induce a laxity of principles and practice. The pleaſure it affords

fords is of a coarſe, mixed, noiſy, and rude kind. Indeed, it commonly ends in wearineſs and diſguſt, as even they are ready to confeſs, who yet conſtantly purſue it, as if the chief good conſiſted in living in a crowd.

Among thoſe, indeed, who are exempted by their circumſtances from profeſſional and official employments, and who profeſſedly devote themſelves to a life of pleaſure, little elſe ſeems to conſtitute the idea of pleaſure, but an unceaſing ſucceſſion of company, public or private. The dreſs, and other circumſtances preparatory to the enjoyment of this pleaſure, ſcarcely leave a moment for reflection. Day after day is ſpent in the ſame toilſome round, till a habit is formed, which renders diſſipation neceſſary to exiſtence. One week without it would probably induce a lowneſs of ſpirits, which might terminate in deſpair and ſuicide. When the mind has no anchor, it will ſuffer a kind of ſhipwreck; it will ſink in whirlpools, and be daſhed on rocks. What, indeed, is life or its enjoyments without ſettled principles, laudable purpoſes, mental exertions, and internal comfort? It is merely a vapour, or, to drop the language of figure on ſo ſerious a ſubject, it is a ſtate worſe than non-entity, ſince it poſſeſſes a reſtleſs power of action productive of nothing but miſery.

I very ſeriouſly recommend, therefore, to all who wiſh to enjoy their exiſtence (and who entertains not that wiſh?), that they ſhould acquire not only a power of bearing, but of taking a pleaſure in temporary ſolitude. Every one muſt, indeed, ſometimes be alone. Let him not repine when he is alone, but learn to ſet a value on the golden moments. It is then that he is enabled to ſtudy himſelf and the world around him. It is then that he is led to ſee things as they are, and to remove the deceitful veil, which almoſt every thing aſſumes in the buſy ſcene of worldly employments. The ſoul is enabled to retire into herſelf, and to exert thoſe energies, which are always attended with ſublime pleaſure. She is enabled to ſee the dependent, frail, and wretched ſtate of man as the child of nature, and incited by her diſcovery to implore grace and protection

tection from the Lord of the univerſe. They, indeed, who fly from ſolitude, can ſeldom be religious; for religion requires meditation. They may be ſaid to live without God in the world; not, it is true, from atheiſtical principles, but from a careleſſneſs of diſpoſition; a truly deplorable ſtate, the conſciouſneſs of which could not fail to cloud the gaiety of thoſe halcyon beings, who ſport in the ſunſhine of unremitted pleaſure.

I may, I believe, aſſert, that the love of pleaſure, the follies of faſhion, and the extravagancies of diſſipation, are greater enemies to religion, than all the writers who have endeavoured to attract notice by attacking the eſtabliſhment. Many, it is to be feared, have lived and died in the regions of gaiety, without ever having felt a ſenſe of religion. Prayers, ſermons, churches, the clergy, and the goſpel, were things which never ſtruck them, and from which they received no more impreſſion than a blind man from the exhibition of a pageant. To feel the fine ſenſibilities of devotion, it is neceſſary to commune with our own hearts, upon our beds, and to be ſtill. If we had but courage to withdraw ourſelves from the world, we ſhould often find in our ſtudy, and on our knees, ſuch pleaſures as the world cannot give.

I may alſo add, that few will be found to diſplay prudence or conſiſtency of conduct, who do not ſometimes ſtep aſide from the tumult of the throng, to conſider coolly their circumſtances and ſituation. Life cannot proceed fortuitouſly without incurring momentary danger. Plans of conduct muſt be formed, precautions taken, errors retrieved, and the probabilities of futurity conſidered. But all this requires thought, and thought, retirement.

Not only religion, virtue, and prudence, will be promoted by occaſional ſolitude, but a reliſh will be given to the rational enjoyments of a pleaſurable life. Viciſſitude is eſſential to every ſtate of durable enjoyment. He who has ſpent a little part of his time in his cloſet, or in his groves, will partake of the gaieties of the aſſembly with freſh delight, as a man, when he is hungry, finds an additional flavour in his daily food.

But

But it must be remembered, that, in recommending solitude, I mean only occasional solitude. There is no doubt but that man is made for action, and that his duties and pleasures are often most numerous and most important amidst the busy hum of men. Many vices, and many corrupt dispositions, have been fostered in a solitary life. Monkery is not favourable to human nature or human happiness; but neither is unlimited dissipation. Cautions and remedies must always be applied, where the greatest danger appears. And I think it will admit no dispute, but that, in this age and nation, men are much more likely to be injured by too constant an intercourse with the world, than by too much retirement.

But nothing without moderation is durable or wise. Let there be a sweet interchange of retirement and association, of repose and activity. A few hours spent every day by the votaries of pleasure in serious meditation, would render their pleasure pure, and more unmixed with misery. It would give them knowledge, so that they would see how far they might advance in their pursuit without danger; and resolution, so that they might retreat when danger approached. It would teach them how to live; a knowledge, which, indeed, they think they possess already; and that it would also teach them, and they are often too little solicitous to learn, how to die.

No. XXXVIII. REFLECTIONS ON THE ART OF PHYSIC.

WE cannot help feeling a pleasure, mixed indeed with severe regret, while we look back on the Antediluvian World, and read the fabulous accounts of a golden age. The absence of that natural evil, which has ever since infused into the cup of human felicity a bitter mixture, must have rendered existence an uninterrupted pleasure, and must have heightened

every actual enjoyment, by admitting the comfortable reflection, that preſent indulgence was not to be paid for by future pain.

But, alas! the golden age exiſted only in the regions of poetry. Moral evil ſoon made its appearance in an animal ſo imperfect as man, and had an immediate tendency to produce natural. The gratification of the animal appetites was, for obvious reaſons, connected with pleaſure; and, in order to prolong or improve that pleaſure, recourſe was had to refinement and exceſs. Theſe not only ſuperinduced diſeaſe, but occaſioned an imbecility, that rendered it more difficult to be removed.

Man furniſhed by nature with a greater ſuſceptibility of pleaſure, than was indulged to other animals, was poſſeſſed likewiſe of a ſuperior ſagacity, which enabled him to modify and heighten his enjoyments with all the ſubtlety of art. His boaſted reaſon became the pander of his appetites. A taſte for ſimple food and ſimple manners, the one the beſt preſervative of health, the other of innocence, was loſt amid the acquired advantages of civilization.

The human body, even in the earlieſt ages, and before the univerſal prevalence of luxury, was indeed expoſed to various diſeaſes. Its complicated organization rendered its motions eaſy to be retarded or obſtructed by the unavoidable influence of an atmoſphere. We find that animals, who approach nearly to a ſtate of nature, are yet ſubject to a variety of diſtempers. The moſt uſeful auxiliary of man is known to labour under many violent diſorders, though his food is a pure, vegetable production, preſented to him in its higheſt perfection, and not adulterated by the hand of man. In the infancy of the world, it may reaſonably be concluded from analogy, the body was produced in a ſtronger and ſounder ſtate, than after the lapſe of many thouſand ages, when vice has contaminated the very ſources of population. Freſh from the hand of plaſtic nature, the body was not only more beautiful and proportionate, but leſs diſpoſed to admit morbid commixtures and better enabled to expel them. Yet even then,

then, the effects of the weather, of accidents, of long faſting, or repletion, were neceſſarily felt, and were followed by diſeaſe.

Expoſed to wants, to external dangers, and internal weakneſſes, the impatient mind of man ſoon applied itſelf to the invention of arts, which taught compendious methods of ſupply, of defence, and of remedy. The uſe of iron once diſcovered, gave him the ſuperiority of a more elevated order of beings over thoſe to whom it continued unknown, and the dominion which he acquired over the brutes, exalted him ſtill higher in the ſcale of dignity and power. But though labour was facilitated and ſecurity obtained, yet neither mechanical ingenuity, nor the protection gained by adventitious power, could allay the heat of a fever, or aſſuage the violence of pain; evils which attacked him in the hours of his repoſe, and found their way to him through the walls of the rampart or the caſtle.

The perſonal feelings of the ſufferer, and the anxiety of thoſe who were moſt nearly allied to him by the ties of blood and affection, incited the ſpirit of induſtry and reſearch to procure alleviation. Charms and amulets were the firſt expedients ſuggeſted to the rude mind of the barbarian, ever more inclined to indulge the deluſive hopes of ſuperſtition, than to liſten to the voice of ſober reaſon. But even theſe expedients, inadequate as they appeared, were yet often productive of beneficial effects. Many diſorders, if not quite imaginary, derived much of their violence from the force of imagination. From the ſame ſource their cure was to be obtained. A bead worn a certain time, an inſignificant ceremony performed with the rituals of ſuperſtition, could not effect any immediate alteration in the animal œconomy; but they gave eaſe to the mind of the ſufferer, and, by reſtoring cheerfulneſs and ſpirits, often became really efficacious.

Nor were theſe fanciful methods of cure confined to the ages of ignorance. They who are acquainted with vulgar life, as it appears at preſent, and the manners of thoſe who reſide at a diſtance from the capital, muſt have obſerved a variety of ſuperſtitious practices ſcarcely to be equalled in abſurdity by the rudeſt nations.

There are, for inſtance, many methods of curing an ague, without internal or external application. The poor patient has recourſe to ſome aged matron, who, like the god of phyſic, profeſſes the arts of medicine and prophecy; and he ſeeks not the aid of the regular practitioner, while he can obtain the ſupernatural aſſiſtance of a charm. He waits without reluctance for relief; the diſorder decreaſes by the effects of time and conſtitutional vigour; the credit of the cure is given to the charm: he recommends it in his turn to others, and ſuperſtition prevails in an enlightened age, amid all the triumphs of truth and philoſophy.

Medicine was however early cultivated as an art, founded on certain principles, and confided in by the ſenſible part of mankind as the moſt probable means of relief. The ſlaughter of victims for ſacrifice, and of animals for food, gave an opportunity of inſpecting the parts of organized bodies, which bore a great analogy to the human conſtitution. Chirurgery and phyſic derived from this ſource equal opportunities for improvement. Indeed, it is preſumed, that chirurgical operations were the firſt efforts of the medical art. External maladies, as they were moſt viſible, called more immediately for relief; and external application was the eaſieſt and moſt obvious to reflection. Both branches of the art, long after its invention, were united in the ſame profeſſor, as they uſually are at preſent among our rural practitioners. There is indeed ſufficient reaſon for their combination, ſince a ſkill in them muſt, in great meaſure, reſult from a knowledge of the ſame principles; yet, at the ſame time, each of them will probably be carried to a greater height, when ſeparately purſued by different perſons. This indeed ſeems to accord with the deciſions of experience; for, of thoſe who have arrived at ſingular eminence in either of theſe arts, few have choſen to invade the province of the other. Cheſelden did not preſcribe in a fever, nor did Radcliffe undertake an amputation.

The Greeks, whoſe happy polity was admirably adapted to call forth all thoſe fine qualities of the mind with which they were ſingularly furniſhed by nature, advanced

advanced not only the ornamental arts of painting, poetry, and ſculpture, to perfection, but cultivated the uſeful one of phyſic with a ſucceſs, which has enabled the moderns to make their boaſted improvements. The writings of Hippocrates, though, for obvious reaſons, ſlighted by the buſy practitioner, are held in high eſtimation by the learned phyſician. And if the preſcriptions of the Cöan ſeem to want ſimplicity, and fail of their effect at this period and in our climate; yet have they been of eſſential ſervice to the art, by introducing what is called the dogmatical method in the place of the empirical; and their failure as remedies may be reaſonably attributed to the alterations which the human frame is found to undergo in the revolution of ages, by a general change of dietetic regimen; by removing to different climates, and incorporating with races of men, who ſeem to be diſtinguiſhed from the reſt even in their bodily organization.

Though the writings of the antients, of the Grecian Hippocrates and Galen, and of the Arabian Rhazes and Avicenna, are often talked of by the modern profeſſor, yet are they ſeldom read. Experience, which, after all, is the ſureſt teſt of utility, ſeems to juſtify the neglect. Practical medicine is leſs indebted to books, than any other liberal art. The occaſional varieties of diſtempers are infinite; their complications diſguiſe them, and often produce a new ſpecies, or one that has never been deſcribed with accuracy. He who has recourſe to ſyſtems, is at a ſtand when he ſees a ſymptom unobſerved before; but he who has ſtudied nature in the original, knows how to change his intentions, and adapt endleſs remedies to the endleſs variety of diſorders. Yet theory ſhould certainly go before practice in the preparation for this profeſſion; and the phyſician, who has not read a great deal in his youth, will appear not only illiberal but groſsly ignorant.

For many ſimilar inſtances, Radcliffe may be ſelected to prove, the great practical ſkill, as well as fame in this art, is attainable merely by the aid of experimental phyſiology. He indeed, it is ſaid, was a genius in medicine. To books he owed but little, and was ambitious to appear leſs indebted to them than he really was.

was. He knew, it is true, that experience, the safest guide after the mind is prepared for her instructions by previous institution, is apt, without such preparation, to degenerate to a vulgar and presumptuous empiricism. He therefore laid a foundation of general and liberal knowledge derived from books, on which he erected a noble superstructure, with materials supplied by observation. He certainly possessed, in an eminent degree, a sagacity which nature had bestowed. But he was not a man of profound and accurate science. Perhaps, like many of his profession, he owed a great part of his fame and fortune to the caprice of fashion, and the concurrence of favourable circumstances. If he did not, by his own discoveries, advance the boundaries of knowledge, he took the wisest methods for its improvement at his death, by the most ample benefactions to the University of Oxford. Through the wisdom of their application, he still continues to promote the benevolent purposes of the medical profession, in a general infirmary, raised there by his posthumous bounty. Science gratefully attributes to the same source, a library and observatory, happily placed in a centrical situation, whence the streams of knowledge, like the blood circulating from the heart, are generally diffused. Oxford has indeed been long in possession of advantages favourable to the study of theoretic physic, but scarcely afforded any opportunities for practical information, till the erection of the Radclivian infirmary. And now, since the clinical lecture is established in it, the students will no longer be constrained to seek improvement in the Hospitals of the capital, or at a remote University.

Academical honours are conferred on his profession, and it commonly leads to wealth and popular esteem; but it was not so honourable among the Romans as among us, and all the modern nations of Europe. It was commonly in the hands of slaves, and Antonius Musa is almost the only physician in the golden age of learning who is mentioned with respect. It now possesses the rank and esteem which it deserves. Our physicians have usually united polite learning with physiological knowledge. Many besides Linacre, Mead, Freind,

Freind, and Akenside, have been no less celebrated in the schools of humanity than of science; and have been favoured by Apollo, as much in their poetical as in their medical capacity.

Harvey, from whom is derived one of the noblest discoveries of modern philosophy, has greatly contributed to promote the cultivation of polite literature, together with the skill peculiar to the profession. By instituting an annual Latin oration, he has rendered a knowledge of the elegance of that language necessary to those of the faculty, who are desirous of being distinguished as men of taste. As it might fall to the lot of any individual to speak on the occasion, each has been solicitous of retaining that classical learning, which is too often forgotten, even by men of sense and judgment, soon after their emancipation from scholastic restraint. In pursuit of this end, they have formed a taste for classical works, and have been the patrons, the admirers, and the composers of the most elegant productions. Indeed, in no order are there to be found individuals better informed, more polite, humane, ingenious, than among the regularly-bred physicians.

At the same time it is but just to add, that there are great numbers, and some among them not unpopular, who are distinguished only by superior avarice, impudence, folly, ignorance, and affectation; by qualities, which, though they can hardly fail to render them fashionable, are in themselves effeminate and despicable in the extreme.

It must be confessed, that many of those, whose business it is to combine and administer medicines according to the prescription of others, have, by the benefit of long observation, acquired real skill; and, though they have not to boast the advantage of a very liberal education, are yet justly esteemed as experimental physicians. These constitute a very numerous class in the community, and as they are commonly appealed to in the first instance, and entirely depended upon by the middle and inferior ranks, their medical influence is, on the whole, more extensive than that of those who hold a higher place in the national estimation.

When

When we turn our attention to the loweſt order of practitioners, empirics and pretenders, we ſee this noble art moſt diſgracefully perverted. It is indeed much to be lamented, that the inferior and more numerous claſſes of mankind, who are moſt expoſed to accidents, and who have the feweſt alleviations, are conſtrained by indigence to ſeek relief from men, who have no other preparation for the exerciſe of this important art, but the humble employment of macerating drugs in a mortar, tying labels to the necks of phials, conveying medicines to patients, ſweeping a warehouſe, or kindling the fires of a laboratory. Such are often the moſt daring in the treatment of maladies, for ignorance is naturally preſumptuous. Charity has however ſtept in to remedy the evil; and numerous hoſpitals, ſcattered over the face of our country, have at once afforded an extenſive field for the exertion of beneficence, and the beſt ſchools for the improvement of medicine. In theſe places, ſkilful phyſicians preſide, and the poor have the advantage of regular attendance, of freſh and unadulterated medicines, of proper diet and cleanlineſs, in a manner highly favourable to cure, and which can hardly be ſurpaſſed by the conveniencies of opulence.

Like the pretenders to inſpiration in religion, there are many who boldly enter on the practice of this art, totally deſtitute of preparatory inſtruction, and who make a merit of their defect. Without even thoſe few lights, which may be occaſionally obtained in the courſe of a ſervile apprenticeſhip, they aſſume all the importance of ſufficiency, and dictate with an oracular confidence. Againſt theſe vultures of mankind, againſt theſe harpies of ſociety, who ſcatter pain and death around, under pretence of affording relief; and who, for the ſake of ſupporting an unbecoming parade in life, not only delude, but deſtroy thoſe who apply to them as to friends, under the preſſure of the heavieſt calamities, every honeſt mind muſt feel an indignant ſentiment. The loſs occaſioned by the deceiver, who preys on the poſſeſſions of his fellow-creatures, may be repaired by ſubſequent induſtry or good fortune; but deception,

deception, in this inſtance, is uſually followed by deſtruction.

But how ſhall an evil thus generally felt and complained of, be obviated, without an infringement of civil liberty; that boaſted privilege, of which we are ſometimes more jealouſly tenacious than of health and life? Admonition is ineffectual; for of thoſe who ſuffer, few have not been apprized of the danger of truſting to empiriciſm.

The progreſs of empirical fame and ſucceſs is eaſily traced, though not eaſily retarded. A powerful medicine is exhibited to ſome wretched individual, whoſe indigence induces him to be grateful for the notice and aſſiſtance of the ignorant. If his complaint is removed, as it would otherwiſe have been by the ſilent operation of time, he is triumphantly dragged forth to public view, and his name is added to atteſt the wonderful efficacy of the pretender's noſtrum. The regular practitioner is inſulted. Facts ſpeak for themſelves, and even men of ſenſe hear and believe. The gaping crowd preſs round the mountebank, and ſwallow the doſe of death with avidity, led on by the ſunſhine of deluſive hope, like the poor fluttering inſect, that is allured to its own deſtruction by a deceitful blaze.

The wiſdom and authority of the legiſlature might, indeed, leſſen or remove the evil. But it has never yet interfered, not only from an unwillingneſs to multiply reſtraints in a free country, but perhaps from a doubt whether ſome equivalent advantage may not ariſe from the liberty of attempting medical experiments. It is a truth ſomewhat mortifying to the regular votaries of ſcience, that many of the moſt important diſcoveries have been made by the ignorant and by chance. Thoſe who have been taught to adhere to ſyſtems are ſometimes too much attached to the ſtraight and known path, to permit themſelves to venture even on proper deviation. While the uneducated experimentaliſt, a ſtranger to the prepoſſeſſions unavoidably derived from learning, is almoſt ſure to acquire the merit of originality. Unacquainted with the paths of thoſe who have gone before, he is under a neceſſity of

purſuing a track of his own. He is commonly bewildered, it is true, but yet it ſometimes happens, that he finds out a ſhorter or more agreeable road. In the infinite trials which his boldneſs inſtigates him to make, he blunders on a uſeful diſcovery, which would never have been known to the more expert and cautious. Unfortunate individuals ſuffer in the courſe of his inquiries, but the community at large is ſometimes benefited by an acceſſion to experimental knowledge.

In no profeſſion is it more deſirable, that there ſhould be examinations previous to a licence to practice. The want of a ſtrict examination will render a profeſſion low and contemptible which was once highly honoured.

It was indeed natural that medicine ſhould be highly honoured, and its firſt inventors or improvers exalted to gods and demigods. As life itſelf is of ſmall value without health, no wonder the reſtorers of health were ranked among the beſtowers of life. The profeſſion has always obtained a high rank in the ſcale of civil ſubordination, except, indeed, among the Romans. In this inſtance the moderns act the more wiſely, if there is truth in the maxim, that honour is the nurſe of arts.

It is however greatly to be regretted, that popular eſteem is often miſplaced, and rather tends to encourage bold, preſumptuous, and unbluſhing ignorance, than to raiſe merit from the vale of obſcurity. Faſhion, it is allowed, has contributed more to the eſtabliſhment of many celebrated phyſicians, than any ſuperiority of knowledge that they poſſeſſed. This popularity, however, has ſometimes been the cauſe of that merit, of which it ought to have been the effect. It has given men of moderate abilities and attainments, ſuch numerous and extenſive opportunities of improving by experience, as could not be obtained by the able, yet unemployed.

Faſhion may be allowed to rule with abſolute ſway in her proper province, in the *mundus muliebris*; but let her not dictate in matters ſo important as the means of reſtoring health. Among phyſicians of integrity and liberal

liberal education, let her ſelect whom ſhe pleaſes; but let her not ſet aſide the votary of ſcience and philoſophy, to aſk the advice of the needy, the illiterate, the bold empiric.

No. XXXIX. ON THE MEANS OF RENDERING OLD AGE HONOURABLE AND COMFORTABLE.

IT is a melancholy conſideration, that man, as he advances in life, degenerates in his nature, and gradually loſes thoſe tender feelings, which conſtitute one of his higheſt excellencies. The tear of ſenſibility, ſaid Juvenal, is the moſt honourable characteriſtic of humanity.

Whatever real pain may ſometimes be occaſioned by ſenſibility, is in general counterbalanced by agreeable ſenſations, which are not the leſs ſincere and ſoothing, becauſe they do not excite the joy of thoughtleſs merriment. The anguiſh of the ſympathetic heart is keen, but no leſs exalted are its gratifications. Notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid on the happineſs of a phlegmatic diſpoſition, every one who has formed a true eſtimate of things will deprecate it as a curſe that degrades his nature. It is the negative happineſs of the dulleſt of quadrupeds doomed to the vileſt drudgery. Who would wiſh to be a Bœotian whoſe lot had fallen in Attica?

Wretched however as is the ſtate when the heart ceaſes to feel the quick vibrations of love and pity, we are all haſtening to it by that law of our nature, which obliges us, when arrived at a certain point of perfection, to recede with retrograde rapidity from all that gave us the power of pleaſing or receiving pleaſure. But if old age were attended only with the deprivation of amiable qualities, the loſs of ſenſibility might often be eſteemed a happineſs to the individual, as it would prevent him from feeling one of the greateſt of natural and undeſerved calamities. But the truth is, the abſence of all that is lovely is ſometimes ſupplied by all that

that is odious; as in the ſeaſon of winter, the verdure and muſic of the foreſt are not only no more, but are ſucceeded by the howling of the blaſt, and the dreary proſpect of nakedneſs and horror. Old age, though dead to many pleaſing ſenſations, is ſtill moſt feelingly alive to pain.

Of theſe evils part is derived from nature and is inevitable, and part from an erroneous conduct, which may be regulated by reaſon and philoſophy.

When the body becomes debilitated by age, languor or pain muſt neceſſarily enſue. Bodily infirmities gradually impair the ſtrength of the mind. Uneaſy ſenſations, continued for a long time, ſour the native ſweetneſs of the temper. And the peeviſhneſs, the moroſeneſs, and the ſeverity which characterize the laſt ſtage of life, however diſguſtful, are to be palliated, and no more deſerve to be cenſured as voluntary faults, than the aching of the joints. They are the natural reſult of mental pain, and follow from a wounded mind, no leſs ſpontaneouſly or unavoidably, than blood guſhes from the inciſion of an artery. They diſturb tranquillity, and poiſon convivial enjoyment; but they ought to be patiently borne with, if not from motives of humanity, yet from the conſideration, that the day is not far diſtant, when we ſhall ſtand in need of the ſame indulgence. And we may hereafter experimentally know how cutting to the heart are the impatient reproaches of thoſe, who are bound by the ties of conjugal, filial, and domeſtic duty, to ſooth us under the preſſure of calamity, and, as the pious poet expreſſes it, to rock the cradle of declining age.

But experience proves, that old age is not always attended with natural infirmity. Original ſtrength of conſtitution, or habitual temperance, often produce a green old age. In this caſe, the odious qualities uſually attributed to that period are without excuſe. Proportionate improvement ſhould be the effect of long obſervation and experience. The vice of avarice, the characteriſtic diſtinction of the laſt ſtage of life, is then more than ever unreaſonable. It is no leſs abſurd, as it has often been ſaid, than to provide a greater quantity of ſtores, the nearer the voyage approaches to its concluſion.

concluſion. It is alſo the ſource of every other deteſtable diſpoſition. It habituates the heart to ſuffer the ſight of woe without commiſeration; becauſe pity prompts to relieve, and relief is attended with expence. Hardneſs of heart, like all its other tendencies, is increaſed by voluntary indulgence, and he who has long diſregarded the happineſs or miſery of thoſe who were allied to him by the common tie of humanity, will ſoon become unkind among his nearer connections, cruel to his family and friends, and more cruel to himſelf.

Another diſpoſition, which cauſes the old man to be avoided by thoſe, who are moſt capable of affording him amuſement, is an unreaſonable auſterity of manners. A ſtranger to the feelings of youth, and forgetful that he once was young, he judges even the innocent ſallies of lively ſpirits, and a warm heart, by the ſevereſt dictates of rigid prudence. His judgment, however, he finds is little attended to by thoſe, who are addreſſed on all ſides by a more alluring voice. He becomes impatient and querulous. He condemns every thing that is produced in the preſent times, and extols the faſhions, the diverſions, the dreſs, the manners, the learning, the taſte, that prevailed in the days of his youth, and which appeared to him ſuperior to thoſe of the preſent times, ſolely becauſe his powers of perception were then more lively and acute; the very reaſon why the preſent appear with ſuch irreſiſtible charms in the eyes of his grandſon.

For the natural evils of old age, relief is to be ſought from the phyſician rather than the moraliſt. But philoſophy can aſſuage the pain which it cannot cure. It can ſuggeſt reflections, which operate like balſam on the wounds of the mind. It can teach us to bear thoſe evils which it cannot remove, and, by calling forth our powers of reſiſtance, enable us to alleviate the load.

All, however, are not capable of receiving the benefits of philoſophy. Few but thoſe, whoſe underſtandings have been cultivated, and affections refined by liberal education, are able to underſtand or profit by the wiſe precepts of an Epictetus or a Cicero. Of ſtill greater

greater efficacy than the philoſophy of theſe or any other writers, religion ſteps in to infuſe an ingredient into the bitter cup of life, which never fails to ſweeten it, and which is adapted to the taſte of every human creature.

Religion, indeed, is able of itſelf moſt effectually to diſſipate the clouds, and to diffuſe a ſunſhine on the evening of life. But to thoſe who are converſant in literature, the celebrated treatiſe of Cicero may be collaterally recommended as affording ſolid conſolation. Many moral treatiſes, however juſt and pleaſing they may appear on the peruſal, are of little uſe in the conduct of life, and terminate in ſpeculative amuſement. But the Treatiſe on Old Age preſcribes rules, and ſuggeſts ideas, which, if permitted to influence practice, muſt render that period of life truly pleaſing and honourable. Every old man, who wiſhes to be wiſe and happy, and conſequently an object of reſpect, ſhould turn it over, as Horace adviſes the ſtudent to peruſe the Greek volumes, by day and night. Nor can an ignorance of the Latin language be pleaded in excuſe for the omiſſion, ſince the elegant tranſlation of Melmoth has preſerved all the meaning of the original, together with a great ſhare of its grace and ſpirit.

The indigent and the uninſtructed cannot enjoy the additional benefit of pagan wiſdom; but they have the comfort to know, that evangelical philoſophy is fully adequate to the cure of mental diſeaſe, and at the ſame time requires neither extraordinary abilities, nor the opportunities of learned leiſure, nor the toil of ſtudy. An attendance upon the offices of religion, and on the duties of charity, at the ſame time that it fills up the vacant hours of ſuperannuated life, with that cheerfulneſs which ever attends laudable employment, tends to inſpire ideas of patience and reſignation. A devotional taſte or ſpirit will afford the moſt lively enjoyments. The turbulent pleaſures of youth may be ſucceeded by a religious fervour; by a flame which is capable of warming the cold blood of age, and of affording ſatisfactions ſimilar to thoſe of more youthful paſſions, without their danger or criminality.

Thus

Thus may the dignity of age be ſupported. And upon its dignity greatly depends its happineſs. It is that alone which can repel the inſolence of youth, too often inſtigated by the levity of thoughtleſs health, to forget the reverence which among the ancients was thought due to the hoary head. It is really lamentable to obſerve in many families, the aged parent ſlighted and neglected, and like an old-faſhioned piece of furniture, or uſeleſs lumber, thrown aſide with contempt. Such treatment is diſguſtingly unnatural; but it is not eaſily to be avoided, where there is no perſonal merit, no authority derived from ſuperior wiſdom to compenſate the want of attractive qualities. Tenderneſs and affection may be patient and aſſiduous; but who would not rather command the attention of reſpect, than excite the aid of pity? For the ſake, however, of domeſtic happineſs, it ſhould be remembered, that the authoritative air of wiſdom muſt be tempered with a ſweetneſs of manners; and it will be found, that the reverence which does not exclude love, is the moſt deſirable.

To preſerve the ſenſibility of youth at an advanced period is difficult; becauſe reaſon and philoſophy, it is to be feared, can contribute little to its continuance. The loſs of it is a natural conſequence of decay. Much of the milk of human kindneſs, as it is often called, flows from a fine contexture of the nerves; a contexture which is broken, and a ſubtilty which is deſtroyed by duration.

Exceſs, however, precipitates the effects of time. Temperance in youth, together with the other advantages of that happy period, will protract its ſenſibility. And among the many arguments for early wiſdom, this muſt have great weight, that wiſdom in youth is uſually followed by happineſs in age.

Perhaps nothing may contribute more to prolong the amiable diſpoſitions of youth, than the retaining of a taſte for its innocent amuſements. We often grow old in our ſentiments, before we are ſtricken in years. We accuſtom ourſelves to melancholy ideas of gradual decay, and before we are incapacitated for enjoyment, renounce the ſatisfaction which we might partake.

Pleaſurable

Pleasurable ideas, no less than painful, are caught by sympathy. He who frequents the circles of youth and cheerfulness, will find himself involuntarily inspired with gaiety; he will for a while forget his cares; his wrinkles will be smoothed, and his heart dilated. And though he will not experience the effect of Medea's caldron, in the renovation of his body, he will feel his mind, in a great measure, restored to its former vigour and activity.

The books we read in age will have a great influence on the temper, as well as on the conduct and the understanding. After a certain period, many of us, from motives of mistaken propriety, close our books of entertainment, and peruse nothing but those serious treatises, which, though proper at certain times, yet, when perused without variety, induce a settled melancholy, rather than a principled wisdom. Why should the imagination, that fertile source of all that is delightful, be left uncultivated at a time when pleasures become most deficient? Why should the works of a Horace, a Virgil, a Homer, be laid aside for the meditations of a Seneca and Antoninus? The judicious mixture of books addressed to the fancy, with those which enlighten the understanding, would increase the effect of both, at the same time that it would contribute to health and happiness by affording lively pleasure.

Horace wished that he might not spend his old age without his lyre. Music is, indeed, a sweet companion in every stage of life, but to the last it is peculiarly adapted. It furnishes employment without painful exertion, and, while it charms the sense, sooths the heart.

No. XL. ON THE HAPPINESS OF DOMESTIC LIFE.

AN active life is expoſed to many evils, which cannot reach a ſtate of retirement; but it is found, by the uniform experience of mankind, to be, upon the whole, productive of the moſt happineſs. All are found deſirous of avoiding the liſtleſſneſs of an unemployed condition. Without the incentives of ambition, of fame, of intereſt, of emulation, men eagerly ruſh upon hazardous and painful enterpriſes. There is a quick ſucceſſion of ideas, a warm flow of ſpirits, an animated ſenſation, conſequent on exertion, which amply compenſates the chagrin of diſappointment, and the fatigue of attention.

One of the moſt uſeful effects of action is, that it renders repoſe agreeable. Perpetual reſt is pain of the moſt intolerable kind. But a judicious interchange of reſt and motion, of indolent enjoyment and ſtrenuous efforts, gives a true reliſh of life; which, when too tranquil, is inſipid, and when too much agitated, diſguſtful.

This ſweet repoſe, which is neceſſary to reſtore, by relaxing the tone of the weary mind, has been ſought for by the wiſeſt and greateſt of men at their own fire-ſide. Senators and heroes have ſhut out the acclamations of an applauding world, to enjoy the prattling of their little ones, and to partake the endearments of family converſation. They knew that even their beſt friends, in the common intercourſe of life, were in ſome degree actuated by intereſted motives in diſplaying their affection; that many of their followers applauded them in hopes of reward; and that the giddy multitude, however zealous, were not always judicious in their approbation. But the attentions paid them at their fire-ſide, the ſmiles which exhilarated their own table, were the genuine reſult of undiſſembled love.

The

The nurſery has often alleviated the fatigues of the bar and the ſenate-houſe. Nothing contributes more to raiſe the gently-pleaſing emotions, than the view of infant innocence, enjoying the raptures of a game at play. All the ſentiments of uncontrolled nature diſplay themſelves to the view, and furniſh matter for agreeable reflection to the mind of the philoſophical obſerver. To partake with children in their little pleaſures, is by no means unmanly. It is one of the pureſt ſources of mirth. It has an influence in amending the heart, which neceſſarily takes a tincture from the company that ſurrounds us. Innocence as well as guilt is communicated and increaſed by the contagion of example. And the great author of evangelical philoſophy has taught us to emulate the ſimplicity of the infantine age. He ſeems indeed himſelf to have been delighted with young children, and found in them what he in vain ſought among thoſe who judged themſelves their ſuperiors, unpolluted purity of heart.

Among the great variety of pictures, which the vivid imagination of Homer has diſplayed throughout the Iliad, there is not one more pleaſing than the family-piece, which repreſents the parting interview between Hector and Andromache. It deeply intereſts the heart, while it delights the imagination. The hero ceaſes to be terrible, that he may become amiable. We admire him while he ſtands completely armed in the field of battle; but we love him more while he is taking off his helmet, that he may not frighten his little boy with its nodding plumes. We are refreſhed with the tender ſcene of domeſtic love, while all around breathes rage and diſcord. We are pleaſed to ſee the arm, which is ſhortly to deal death and deſtruction among a hoſt of foes, employed in careſſing an infant ſon with the embraces of paternal love. A profeſſed critic would attribute the pleaſing effect entirely to contraſt; but the heart has declared, previouſly to the inquiries of criticiſm, that it is chiefly derived from the ſatisfaction, which we naturally take in beholding great characters engaged in tender and amiable employments.

But,

But, after all that is ſaid of the purity and the ſolidity of domeſtic pleaſures, they unfortunately appear, to a great part of mankind, inſipid, unmanly, and capable of ſatisfying none but the weak, the ſpiritleſs, the inexperienced, and the effeminate. The pretenders to wit and modern philoſophy are often found to renounce the received opinions of prudential conduct; and while they affect a ſuperior liberality, to regulate their lives by the moſt ſelfiſh principles. Whatever appears to have little tendency to promote perſonal pleaſure and advantage, they leave to be performed by thoſe ſimple individuals, who are dull enough, as they ſay, to purſue the journey of life by the ſtraight road of common ſenſe. It is true, they will allow, that the world muſt be repleniſhed by a perpetual ſucceſſion; and it is no leſs true, that an offſpring, once introduced into the world, requires all the care of painful attention. But let the taſk be reſerved for meaner ſpirits. If the paſſions can be gratified without the painful conſequences of ſupporting a family, they eagerly ſeize the indulgence. But the toil of education they leave to thoſe whom they deem fools enough to take a pleaſure in it. There will always be a ſufficient number, ſay they, whoſe folly will lead them, for the ſake of a ſilly paſſion, called virtuous love, to engage in a life of perpetual anxiety. The fool's paradiſe, they add with a jeer, will never be deſerted.

Preſumptuous as are all ſuch pretenders to newly-invented ſyſtems of life and conduct, it is not to be ſuppoſed they will think themſelves ſuperior to Cicero. Yet Cicero, with all his liberality of mind, felt the tenderneſs of conjugal and paternal attachment, and acknowledged that, at one time, he received no ſatisfaction in any company but that of his wife, his little daughter, and, to uſe his own epithet, his HONIED young Cicero. The great Sir Thomas More, whom nobody will ſuſpect of narrowneſs of mind, who by a very ſingular treatiſe evinced, that he was capable of thinking and of chuſing for himſelf, has left it on record, that he devoted a great ſhare of his time, from the united motives of duty and delight, to the amuſement of his children.

It

It will be objected by thoſe, who pretend to have formed their ideas of life from actual obſervation, that domeſtic happineſs, however pleaſing in deſcription, like many a poetic dream, is but an alluring picture, deſigned by a good heart, and painted in glowing colours by a lively fancy. The conſtant company, they urge, even of thoſe we love, occaſions an inſipidity. Inſipidity grows into diſguſt. Diſguſt, long continued, ſours the temper. Peeviſhneſs is the natural conſequence. The domeſtic circle becomes the ſcene of diſpute. Mutual antipathy is ingenious in deviſing mutual torment. Sullen ſilence or malignant remarks fill up every hour, till the arrival of a ſtranger cauſes a temporary reſtraint, and excites that good humour which ought to be diſplayed among thoſe, whom the bonds of affection and blood have already united.

Experience, indeed, proves that theſe remarks are ſometimes verified. But that there is much domeſtic miſery, is no argument that there is no domeſtic happineſs, or that the miſery may not be removed.

Natural ſtupidity, natural ill-temper, acquired ill-habits, want of education, illiberal manners, and a neglect of the common rules of diſcretion, will render every ſpecies of intercourſe diſagreeable. When thoſe are united by connubial ties, who were ſeparated by natural and inherent diverſity, no wonder if that degree of happineſs, which can only reſult from a proper union, is unknown. In the forced alliance, which the poet of Venuſium mentions, of the ſerpent with the dove, of the tyger with the lamb, there can be no love. When we expatiate on the happineſs of the domeſtic groupe, we preſuppoſe that all who compoſe it are originally aſſimilated by affection, and are ſtill kept in union by diſcreet friendſhip. Where this is not the caſe, the cenſure muſt fall on the diſcordant diſpoſition of the parties, and not on the eſſential nature of family intercourſe.

To form, under the direction of prudence, and by the impulſe of virtuous love, an early conjugal attachment, is one of the beſt ſecurities of virtue, as well as the moſt probable means of happineſs. The duties, which are powerfully called forth by the relations of

husband

husband and father, are of that tender kind which inspires goodness and humanity. He who beholds a woman whom he loves, and an helpless infant looking up to him for support, will not easily be induced to indulge in unbecoming extravagance, or devote himself to indolence. He who has a rising family to introduce into a vicious world, will be cautious of setting a bad example, the contagion of which, when it proceeds from parental authority, must be irresistibly malignant. Thus many who, in their individual and unconnected state, would probably have spent a life not only useless to others, but profligate and careless in itself, have become valuable members of the community, and have arrived at a degree of moral improvement, to which they would not otherwise have attained.

The contempt in which domestic pleasures have in modern times been held, is a mark of profligacy. It is also a proof of a prevailing ignorance of real enjoyment. It argues a defect in taste and judgment, as well as in morals. For the general voice of the experienced has in all ages declared, that the truest happiness is to be found at home.

No. XLI. ON THE ILL EFFECTS OF RIDICULE, WHEN EMPLOYED AS A TEST OF TRUTH IN PRIVATE AND COMMON LIFE.

HORACE once happened to say with an air of levity, that ridicule was more efficacious in deciding disputes of importance, than all the severity of argument. Shaftesbury caught the idea, improved upon it, and advanced the doctrine, that ridicule is the test of truth. All those who possessed one characteristic of man, in great perfection, RISIBILITY, but who were slenderly furnished with the other, rationality, adopted the opinion with eagerness; for though to reason was difficult, to laugh was easy.

The

The admirers of the graces were glad of so pleasing a method of philosophizing, and seized on it without examination. They who admitted it, were under a necessity of smiling; and to smile, if not to laugh, was allowed to be graceful by the great legislator of decorum.

The speculative opinions of studious men, however erroneous, often afford them innocent amusement in their closets, without diffusing any malignant influence on the manners or happiness of others. However interesting to the philosopher may be the disputes concerning liberty and necessity, or the nature of good and evil, they attract not the regard of those who are agitated in the busy walk of life, by the common pursuits of interest and pleasure. The metaphysician thinks his labours of great importance to the happiness of mankind, and would be not a little mortified to find, that in the great numbers who compose the community to which he belongs, and for whose more immediate edification he consumes the midnight oil, a very small part knows that there ever existed such men as Berkeley or Hume; and that, if they knew, and could understand their works, they would prefer the opportunity of earning a penny, or enjoying a good dinner, to all the advantage that ever could be derived from a conviction that matter existed not, or that the old principles of morals were erroneous.

But though this may be true of those doctrinal opinions, which are too abstracted for vulgar apprehension, yet it will be found, that there are speculative notions, which, as they require no great improvement of understanding to be comprehended, are adopted as axioms as soon as proposed, and permitted to influence the conduct of life. He who is a convert to materialism, a doctrine of late unhappily recommended by virtuous and well-meaning writers, will certainly lose some restraints which operated favourably on his morals. It is true, the writer who thus gives it all the recommendation his subtlety can supply, though he speaks the dictates of conviction, is perhaps not apparently corrupted. But a reasonable cause may be assigned for his escaping the effect of the poison which he

he bears about him. He is probably a man of letters; leads a life remote from violent temptations; has acquired habits of virtue; and, perhaps, from the practice of reasoning and disputation, can maintain or explode opinions, which concern the most important interests of his fellow-creatures, with all the indifference of a by-stander. But his opinions are plausibly supported; they are pleasing to the lover of novelty; they afford solid consolation to the vicious; and they are read by those who want a sanction for flagitious conduct, who wish to be furnished with arguments to make proselytes to vice, and who are desirous of silencing the voice of conscience even by the fallacies of sophistry. They are read by the young and the gay, as a system of philosophy newly discovered, which far surpasses the antiquated doctrines of the received moralist, and as favourable to those ideas, which they gladly embrace on the expediency of unlimited indulgence.

That ridicule is an infallible criterion of truth, is an opinion, from its peculiar correspondency to the taste of the greater part of mankind, much more prevalent, and therefore more detrimental in the common intercourse of life.

Men destitute of delicacy, and that solid merit which is usually accompanied with diffidence, often rise to the highest eminence, acquire the largest fortunes, fill the most important offices, and give law to the sentiments as well as practice of others. These, judging from themselves, have no adequate idea of the dignity of human nature, and the comparative perfection of which it is capable. They perhaps have been uniformly vicious, yet have had the temporal reward of virtue; they have been ignorant, yet have been admired for their wisdom; they have despised all the precepts of moral philosophy, and by dint of that effrontery which natural want of feeling inspires, have raised themselves to fame and fortune. Bold through the natural presumption of ignorance, and still farther elated by success, by the flattery, by the attentions which are paid to the most undeserving prosperity, they learn to laugh at all the serious part of the world, who

who are defrauding their genius, as it is called, in the rigid ſervitude of a fanciful virtue.

No wonder then that ridicule prevails in the lower orders; for rank, fortune, and ſpirit, without the leaſt portion of learning and philoſophy, are at any time able to raiſe a multitude of admirers, and to eſtabliſh a faſhion. When men, with very few other recommendations than the abſence of modeſty, become the leaders of a nation, a taſte for RIDICULE, or, in other words, a malicious deſire of levelling the exaltation of indigent virtue to the ſtandard of worthleſs grandeur, will become general among all ranks. This taſte, which tends to vilify all that can adorn and ennoble a human creature, has been too common in every long-eſtabliſhed and corrupted community. He muſt have remarked but little, who has not ſeen its baneful influence in our own times and country. All the cardinal virtues, if the efforts of certain groſs ſpirits could prevail, would be laughed out of countenance, and no ſemblance of them be left amongſt us but the unſubſtantial and imitating phantom, MODERN HONOUR.

Let us trace the progreſs of ſome ingenuous youth, emerging from an uncorrupted ſeminary to his ſtation in the active world. In the retirements of ſtudy, he has formed advantageous ideas of that life, on which he is now to enter. His heart glows with virtuous and benevolent purpoſes. He has been reading of thoſe legiſlators, heroes, philoſophers, patriots, who ſhine with luſtre in the page of hiſtory, and who derived all their ſplendour from their virtue. He longs to emulate them. He values himſelf little on his birth or fortune, if he has them, but owns he feels a conſcious dignity ariſing from his acquirements, his learning, his comprehenſive views, his liberal and diſintereſted intentions. He loves fame, and hopes to acquire by deſerving it.

Thus principled, ſuppoſe him introduced where his fortune leads him, among ſome of the antient nobles of the land; the hereditary or the elected lawgivers of his country, aſſembled at their uſual places of reſort, a cockpit, a horſe-race, a chocolate-houſe, or a watering-place. He is ſtruck dumb with aſtoniſhment. He finds

finds he has hitherto dwelt on fairy ground, where all was enchantment. The fancied ſcene is vaniſhed. He feels himſelf aukward. His accompliſhments are either not underſtood, not valued, or have no opportunities of diſplay. At firſt he is coldly neglected; and, at laſt, when perſonal acquaintance has taken place, he is conſidered as a novice, greatly to be pitied for his ſimplicity, but who may improve in time. Some kind inſtructor undertakes the office, and employs RIDICULE, as the moſt efficacious method of ſucceeding in it. He finds it neceſſary to ſubmit to ſuch initiation, before he can be admitted upon equal terms. He yields, though not without a ſigh of regret, to think that he muſt diveſt himſelf of all thoſe ſentiments, which he once hoped would raiſe him to the rank of the worthies, whom he admired in books, and cannot help lamenting that he muſt ſtudy degeneracy. Self-abaſement is an eaſy taſk. He deſcends from the invidious height of virtue, and is received with pleaſure by his relenting companions. In his turn, he learns to deſpiſe what he once admired, and contributes by his advice and example to ſtrengthen the formidable phalanx of envious deriders. He becomes indeed what is commonly called a wit, that is, a joker, a buffoon, a ſatiriſt, a mere man of the world, and perhaps is really ſo much degraded by contagion, as to judge theſe characters more valuable than that of the ſcholar, the good man, and the philoſopher. He is no longer the man of virtue, but he is the man of faſhion, which he is taught to deem a nobler diſtinction.

All the uſeful and amiable qualities, which ſweeten private and domeſtic life, have occaſionally been put out of countenance by the prevalence of the doctrine, that ridicule is the teſt of truth in common life. Conjugal attachment and fidelity, filial regard, regular induſtry, prudent œconomy, ſincerity in friendſhip, delicate ſcruples, benevolence and beneficence, have been deſtroyed by the pretender to wit, who, from the malignant feelings of envy, has been prompted to beſtow on them ſome ridiculous appellation.

The effect of ridicule cannot but be powerful among the young and inexperienced. It is a remark often made, that the man is found to degenerate from the excellence which diſtinguiſhed him when a boy. In the walks of literary life, inſtances are frequent of thoſe who, though they were the boaſt of their ſchool, appear with no ſuperiority of merit, when they are advanced to higher ſeminaries, or introduced into the world. To ridicule, for the moſt part, they owe their degradation. Their pre-eminence excites the envy of their contemporaries, who naturally endeavour to obſcure that luſtre, which burns them with its blaze. They at firſt value themſelves on thoſe talents or acquiſitions, of the worth of which their companions have no adequate conception. They are received at their college with contempt. Their remarks are attended to with a ſneer, and their ſolemnity, as a decent deportment is called, becomes the ſubject of perpetual laughter. A nickname, the uſual production of envy, is appropriated to them. They are ſhunned, as involving their companions in their own abſurdity and conſequent diſgrace. This laſt is more than they can bear. They lay aſide the appearance of virtuous emulation, and the reality ſoon follows. They ſtudiouſly unlearn all that rendered them truly valuable; and, when they have debaſed themſelves to a certain pitch, they are received with open arms, and are united with their company by the ſtrong aſſimilation of congenial natures.

Genius, virtue, learning, are often diſtinguiſhed by a delicacy of mind, which wears the appearance and produces the effects of infirmity. They are eaſily overruled, if not convinced, by the noiſy antagoniſt, who makes up in clamour what he wants in argument, and gains the victory by dint of leathern lungs and nerves of iron. A horſe-laugh ſet up by a circle of fox-hunters, would overpower the beſt poet or philoſopher whom the world ever admired. The modeſt Virgil could not ſtand the attacks of ſcoffing ridicule; and wiſdom has ever ſought the ſhade, where the impertinence of the great or little vulgar ſeldom intruded.

Cruel

Cruel as it is to diſtreſs ſenſibility, and injurious to mankind to render worth contemptible, we often obſerve perſons of character joining in the laugh againſt modeſty and merit. In the moment of ſocial enjoyment, we do not give ourſelves time to reflect on the conſequence of our mirth; and, perhaps, with kind intentions of promoting convivial happineſs, we often hurt the feelings and intereſts of individuals, as well as the moſt important ends of ſociety.

From the deſire of furniſhing matter for converſation and ſupporting its vivacity, ſome evils ariſe, which at firſt view appear to proceed from malignant cauſes. The tale of ſcandal, though uſually ſuppoſed to be the genuine effect of malevolence, is often produced by thoughtleſs levity, and an unwillingneſs to ſit in company without ſupplying a ſhare of entertainment. The raillery, which is ſometimes played off with ſucceſs by the ſhalloweſt yet boldeſt of the company, againſt perſons of real merit, is not always the reſult of a detracting ſpirit, but of a fondneſs for coarſe mirth, and an inability to let ſlip thoſe opportunities for indulging it, which genius and learning, from an inattention to trifling accompliſhments, are frequently thought to ſupply.

To be cheerful is indiſpenſably neceſſary to the mutual participation of the pleaſures of ſocial intercourſe. To be merry, if it is often deſirable, is not always neceſſary. Let mirth however be uncontrouled, while it is tempered with the wiſdom not to hurt thoſe who deſerve careſſes and reward; and not to ſully the dignity and wound the feelings of unaffected virtue by the wanton ſallies of buffoonery.

Before I leave this ſubject, I would willingly obviate one error. Great laughers are uſually called good-natured. I believe they are often particularly proud and malicious; for there is no method of gratifying pride and malice more effectually than by ridicule.

No. XLII. ON THE ILL EFFECTS OF PROVING BY ARGUMENT TRUTHS ALREADY ADMITTED. IN A LETTER.

SIR,

I HAVE reaſon to think, that I inherited from nature a plain underſtanding, without any pretenſions to the vivacity of genius. I am grateful to my parents, that it was cultivated in that common way which guides through the beaten path of life, and leads not to thoſe eccentricities, which, for the moſt part, terminate in miſery.

I was deſtined to a mercantile life, and my education was therefore confined to writing, arithmetic, and a little elementary Latin acquired at the grammar-ſchool. With my ſteadineſs of conduct, there was little difficulty in acquiring a competency in the trade in which I was ſettled by my father. As I had no family, and was free from avarice and ambition, I retired early from the ſmoke and hurry of the town to a ſweet little houſe and garden on the borders of Epping-foreſt.

A ſtate of total inaction both of body and mind, I found leſs tolerable than the conſtant buſtle of a town life. To my garden I had recourſe for exerciſe. For rural ſports I was unqualified, as I had never fired a gun nor mounted a horſe. My garden, however, amuſed me ſufficiently, contributed to confirm my health, and, at the ſame time, induced a contemplative turn. This led me to ſeek, in books, a ſupply for the loſs of that ſucceſſion of objects, which had ſo long ſolicited and engroſſed my attention in the great ſtreets of the capital.

The particular courſe of reading into which I unfortunately fell, might have proved hurtful, had I not been diſcreet enough to correct its tendency in time. At beſt, it only ſerved to fill up thoſe hours, which might,

might, indeed, have been more agreeably and more uſefully employed.

I had received all the notions uſually inſtilled by parental authority, with implicit belief. I was told that there was one God, and I believed it, for I ſaw his works around me. I embraced revealed religion in all its parts, with the ſame evidence of conviction with which I believed the ſun to exiſt in the heavens, when I beheld its radiance, and felt its warmth. I ſaw and believed the difference between right and wrong, vice and virtue, juſtice and injuſtice, as ſtrongly as the difference between black and white, and ſweet and bitter. I never dreamt of calling in queſtion the authenticity of the ſcriptural writers, the doctrine of the trinity, the divinity of our Saviour, the immateriality and immortality of the human ſoul, and the reſurrection of the body. When I repeated the creed, I ſpoke with the ſame confidence of undoubting conviction, as when I aſſerted the truth of a fact, of which I had ocular demonſtration. The ſteady light of common ſenſe, together with parental authority, had hitherto guided me, and I had been humble enough to follow its directions.

It was now at laſt that I perceived the firſt ſhadow of a doubt on theſe ſubjects, and it was cauſed by the following circumſtances. In collecting my little library, I often met with books entitled Proofs and Demonſtrations of thoſe important points, on which I entertained not a ſingle idea of uncertainty; but I was now naturally led to conclude, that thoſe things were not indiſputably evident, of which ſo many laboured proofs were continually offered to the public notice. My curioſity was raiſed, and I began to ſuſpect, that it was owing to my ſimplicity alone that I had hitherto received, without proof, all thoſe doctrines, of which the world ſeemed to require the moſt powerful defence, and confirmations infinitely repeated.

The bare appearance of an attempt to prove opinions which I had ever conſidered as wanting no other proof than the firſt ſtrong deciſions of common ſenſe, ſhook the ſtability of my conviction. Hitherto my days had been tranquil and ſecure. All my principles in morality

rality and religion had been planted in infancy, and had taken root deep and ſtrong. My underſtanding had not been actively ingenious enough to overturn thoſe ſyſtems of my foreſathers, which had led them through the ways of piety to peace. But I now found my happineſs begin to totter, as my principles began to be undermined.

In the books which were every day offered for the converſion of ſceptics, for refuting atheiſts, for proving chriſtianity, for demonſtrating that there is a difference between good and evil, for aſſerting, that there is ſome eſſential ſuperiority in the human nature over the animal, I found no remedy in my unſettled ſtate; but, on the contrary, an increaſing tendency to univerſal ſcepticiſm. The ingenious authors of ſuch treatiſes find it neceſſary to raiſe objections, in order to remove them, and to give a degree of weight and ſolidity to the arguments of their adverſaries, that the weight and ſolidity of their own victorious arguments may be rendered more conſpicuous and more honourable.

The books of the objectors I ſhould never have read, nor ſhould I have known any thing of their objections, had I not been enſnared into an acquaintance with the enemies of truth by the ill-judged conduct of her friends. Hereſies and errors long forgotten and exploded were revived by theſe, merely to diſplay their ingenuity in refutation. Sometimes, through the weakneſs of their judgment, they gave advantage to ſophiſtry; and, by throwing with a feeble hand a pointleſs dart, encouraged a defeated foe to reſume new courage.

Even in the moſt judicious apologies for thoſe doctrines which I thought wanted no apology, though the arguments were concluſive, I did not perceive that my conviction was ſtrengthened; but, on the contrary, that it was in ſome degree leſs clear than before I had received argumentative demonſtration. My idea of the truth was at firſt ſimple, and proportionably evident; but when that idea was connected with a long chain of arguments, my underſtanding could not ſo readily comprehend it with all its additional appendages. There is a degree of abſtraction in profound writings,

which

which is neceſſarily attended with a little obſcurity. And hence it happens that illuſtrations, as they are called, of important truths, are ſometimes the only circumſtances which involve them in darkneſs.

Whatever complaints have been made againſt the prevalence of infidelity in this age, and however true that may be of the higher or diſſipated orders, it is yet certain, that the chriſtian religion is implicitly received by the greater part of the community. Though their practice, from the infirmity of human nature, is ſeldom correſpondent with their principles, yet they are far from the character of ſpeculative infidels. It is at leaſt highly probable, that all who frequent the eſtabliſhed churches are chriſtians. It has therefore been matter of juſt ſurpriſe, that a great number of the moſt ingenious divines ſhould enter the pulpit, as if they were to convert a congregation of heathens or deiſts. To prove, by a great variety of laboured arguments, the exiſtence of God, is ſurely unneceſſary before an audience, whoſe convention in a church is a proof that they already believe it. It can have little other effect than to lull them aſleep, or to ſuggeſt ſcruples inſtead of removing them. For it is certain, that not half thoſe arguments in ſupport of ſcepticiſm have uſually fallen within the notice of the common hearer, which are for the moſt part adduced in the pulpit, in order to be refuted, by a ſubtile diſputant in divinity. A few good treatiſes might properly enough be written by the truly able, to ſhew the ſophiſtry of a deiſtical author, and then he and his lucubrations might be ſuffered to paſs on to oblivion; whither they would glide with a rapid courſe, if they were not impeded by the imprudent interference of thoſe, who, if they are ſincere and conſiſtent, muſt wiſh to accelerate their extinction.

Neither polemical, controverſial, doctrinal, nor ſyſtematical divinity, ſeems well calculated to anſwer the important ends of true religion. The ends of true religion are all friendly and benign. But peace, benevolence, and purity of heart, are, I believe, not at all promoted in thoſe many volumes of theology, which have

have owed their origin to controverſy, and to logical and metaphyſical refinement. They originate in pride, and terminate in acrimony.

One might, indeed, almoſt venture to pronounce it a judgment on the temerity and the preſumption of man, that ſcarcely any philoſopher has diſtinguiſhed himſelf by thoſe ſpeculations, which were never deſigned to fall within the ſphere of the human intellect, without ſtarting ſome notion abſurd enough to render his memory ridiculous. Berkley, one of the authors on whom I was ſo unfortunate as to fall, and whoſe ſenſe and virtue I venerate, appeared to me an object of ridicule, however ingeniouſly he had demonſtrated to me the non-exiſtence of matter. I happened to meet with him ſoon after I had been reading an author who had proved, ſo far at leaſt as that my poor underſtanding could not refute him, that the human ſoul was material, and periſhed at death. Between them both I found I was, on a ſudden, deprived of both my ſoul and body, without any ſenſible loſs or detriment in either. I was tempted to exclaim, Oh, the fooliſhneſs of vain philoſophy!

Convinced at laſt that common ſenſe, or that ſhare and ſpecies of underſtanding, which nature has beſtowed on the greater part of men, is, when competently improved, the ſafeſt guide to certainty and happineſs, I have laid aſide proofs, demonſtrations, and illuſtrations of all matters ſufficiently proved, demonſtrated, and illuſtrated to the humble mind, by their own internal evidence. And however the learned and the diſputatious may amuſe themſelves in morals and religion with fine-ſpun ſubtilties, I ſhall reſt ſatisfied with the coarſer notions of my forefathers, and make the ſcriptural rule the rule of my thoughts and actions —To do juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with my God.

No.

No. XLIII. ON THE NECESSITY OF TEMPERANCE TO THE HEALTH OF THE MIND.

THE advantages which ariſe, from regulating the ſeveral appetites, to the health of the body, have been too repeatedly inſiſted upon to require any farther animadverſion. The preſent remarks ſhall be confined to temperance of diet in particular, and to the advantages which accrue from it to the health of the mind.

How far the intellectual faculties are connected with the animal œconomy, is a diſquiſition which rather belongs to the natural philoſopher than to the moraliſt. The experience of every individual muſt convince him of their alliance, ſo far as that the mind and the body ſympathize in all the modifications of pleaſure or of pain.

One would imagine, that the ſtoical apathy was founded on a notion of the independence of the mind on the body. According to this philoſophy, the mind may remain, as it were, an unconcerned ſpectator, while the body undergoes the moſt excruciating torments: but the moderns, however diſpoſed to be ſtoics, cannot help being a little afflicted by a fit of the gout or ſtone.

If the mind ſuffers with the body in the violence of pain, and acuteneſs of diſeaſe, it is uſually found to recover its wonted ſtrength when the body is reſtored to health and vigour.

But there is one kind of ſympathy, in which the mind continues to ſuffer even after the body is relieved. When the liſtleſs languor, and the naufeous ſatiety of recent exceſs is gradually worn off, the mind ſtill continues for a while to feel a burden, which no efforts can remove; and to be ſurrounded with a cloud, which time only can diſſipate.

Didactic authors, who have undertaken to preſcribe rules for the ſtudent in his purſuit of knowledge, fre-

quently insist on a regularity and abstinence in the articles of food and wine. It is, indeed, a fruitless labour to him at increasing the stock of ideas, and improving the powers of penetration, without a strict observance of the laws of Temperance.

It has been remarked, that the founders of colleges, who spared no expence in the embellishment of the buildings, have not been so liberal in providing food for the inhabitants. Perhaps those no less judicious than pious patrons of learning were sensible of the utility of frequent fasting and temperate meals, in promoting literary, as well as moral and religious improvement. Nature's wants they took care to satisfy, and Nature wants but little.

Horace, in a satire in which he professedly enumerates the advantages of Temperance, observes, with a beautiful energy of expression, "that the body, over-"charged with the excess of yesterday, weighs down "the mind together with itself, and fixes to the earth "that particle of the divine spirit."

That Aurora is a friend to the Muses, is almost proverbial, and, like all those aphorisms which are founded on experience, is a just remark; but, if an adequate cause were to be assigned for this effect, I know not whether it might not justly be attributed as much to fasting, as to the refreshment of sleep. The emptiness of the stomach it is which tends to give to the understanding acuteness, to the imagination vigour, and to the memory retention.

It is well known, that the principal meal of the ancients was the supper; and it has been matter of surprise that they, whose wisdom was so generally conspicuous in the several institutions of common life, should adopt a practice which is now universally esteemed injurious to health. It is however not unreasonable to suppose, that they were unwilling to clog their intellects by satisfying the cravings of hunger in the day-time, the season of business and deliberation, and chose rather to indulge themselves in the hour of natural festivity, when no care remained, but to retire from the banquet to the pillow.

No.

No. XLIV. ON CONCISENESS OF STYLE IN WRITING AND CONVERSATION.

A Celebrated French writer, remarkable for CONCISENESS OF STYLE, in a letter to a friend which he had made rather longer than uſual, apologizes for its prolixity, by ſaying, that he had not time to write a ſhorter.

To ſay much in few words is certainly a great excellence, and at the ſame time a great difficulty in compoſition. The mind naturally dwells on a ſtrong conception, views it on every ſide, and expreſſes its variety of lights in as great a variety of words; but the amplification of a ſentence, though it may add to its perſpicuity, frequently diminiſhes its force; as the ſcattered ſun beams diffuſe only a gentle heat, but are able to burn when collected in the focus.

Brevity of expreſſion is ſometimes the mark of conſcious dignity and virtue. It was manlineſs of ſentiment, and haughtineſs of ſoul, which gave riſe to the laconic ſtyle. When the tyrant of Macedon menaced the Lacedemonians, the anſwer they returned was compriſed in theſe few words: "Dionyſius is at Corinth." To underſtand which, it is neceſſary to call to mind, that Dionyſius, tyrant of Sicily, had been dethroned by his people, and compelled to earn his bread by ſetting up a little ſchool at Corinth. Such a document, expreſſed in ſo brief a manner, muſt have ſtruck the mind with more force than the laboured periods of an Iſocrates, or the diffuſion of a Cicero.

It is well known, that Salluſt was an enemy to the great orator of Rome. One would almoſt imagine, from the difference of their ſtyle, that the diſagreement extended to matters of taſte and literature. Salluſt always labours to expreſs his ideas in the feweſt words. Cicero delights in amplification. It has been ſaid, however, that a man of true taſte would rather have written

written that beautiful parallel between Cato and Cæsar, than all the Philippics.

Many critics have employed their talents in making comparisons between Demosthenes and Tully. All of them agree in attributing to the former conciseness, and to the latter diffusion: and according to this judgment, they have not hesitated to give the preference to the Athenian. The concise vehemence of Demosthenes carried all before it by violence; the prolixity of Cicero gained ground by the soft arts of insinuation. The effect of the former was sudden and irresistible, that of the latter, weak and dilatory.

In the *denouement* of a modern tragedy, we find the heroes and heroines expressing their grief in pompous declamation. But, notwithstanding the actor mouths out his plaints in all the grandeur of lengthened periods, and with all the vehemence of studied action, the audience frequently sit unmoved, and are more disposed to smile than to weep. In the OEdipus Tyrannus of Sophocles, Jocasta, when she discovers her own and her husband's situation, as deplorable as can well be conceived, immediately retires from the stage, repeating only these words—"Alas! alas! wretched "man that thou art—this only I can say to thee—"henceforth, for ever silent." Corneille would have put, at least, fifty monotonous lines into her mouth, without half the effect.

Military harangues derive their chief beauty from an expressive brevity. Livy abounds with short speeches, consisting of hardly more than half a dozen words, in which Generals animated their soldiers to rush on to danger and death. But ancient history scarcely affords any instance more striking than that of a French king, who thus addressed his men immediately before an attack—"I am your General—you are Frenchmen—"there are the enemy."

Conciseness of narration, whether in writing or in speaking, is a mark of truth. To introduce a multitude of proofs and asseverations, is tacitly to confess, that what is said stands in great need of corroboration. One of our English sects, which professes a singular love

love of truth and plain-dealing, has almoſt made it a tenet of their religion to uſe no other words in denying, or aſſerting, than the ſingle particles of negation and affirmation: and a poet of antiquity remarks, that many promiſes and profeſſions, inſtead of ſtrengthening, weaken our belief.

They who have travelled, know that the Frenchman, in the profuſion of his politeneſs, makes many offers which he expects will be refuſed; and ſhould you really ſtand in need of his aſſiſtance, it is a doubt whether he will give himſelf much trouble to alleviate your diſtreſs, or diſentangle your embarraſſment: but an Engliſhman will do you a piece of ſervice ſecretly, and be diſtreſſed with the expreſſions of your gratitude. The former will overwhelm you with profeſſions of friendſhip, without the leaſt real regard; the latter will be ſurly, and at the ſame time go all lengths in ſoothing your ſorrows and relieving your wants.

Bluntneſs is ſaid to be one of the characteriſtics of the Engliſh, and is allowed to be a natural conſequence of their ſincerity. When it does not degenerate to ruſticity, it is not unpleaſing.

But the good effects of brevity and conciſeneſs, are not to be found only in writing and converſation. There is ſomething analogous to them in the arts of painting and ſculpture. There is a concealment and ſhading, which ſets off more beautifully, and diſplays more clearly, than an open, an undiſguiſed, a glaring repreſentation. Timanthes took for the ſubject of a picture, the ſacrifice of Iphigenia at Aulis. He gave a degree of grief to the ſpectators, proportionate to the nearneſs or diſtance of their relation to the lovely victim. Thus he had exhauſted the paſſion before he came to the father, and, at a loſs to expreſs a ſufficient anguiſh, he repreſented the diſconſolate parent concealing his face in the folds of his garments.

Were the cauſes of the pleaſing and powerful effects of conciſeneſs to be inveſtigated, one of them might perhaps be found to be the pleaſure which a reader, or ſpectator, takes in having ſomething left for his own ſagacity to diſcover. The mind greedily ſnatches at a hint, and delights to enlarge upon it; but frigid is the employment of attending to thoſe productions, the

authors

authors of which have laboured every thing into ſuch perſpicuity, that the obſerver has nothing to do but barely to look on. Things may be too obvious to excite attention. The ſun, the moon, and the ſtars, roll over our heads every day without attracting our notice; but we ſurvey with eager curioſity, a comet, an eclipſe, or any other extraordinary phænomenon in nature.

No. XLV. ON THE CHARACTER AND STYLE OF PLINY THE YOUNGER.

THE character of PLINY the younger, in whatever light it is viewed, is pleaſing. The elegance of his writings reſulted from the habitual elegance of his mind. Conſidered as a man of letters, and a man of the world, he may be ſaid, more than any of the ancients, to deſerve the epithet of *All-accompliſhed*.

It has indeed been objected, that his letters are too elaborate. Eaſe, the characteriſtic of the epiſtolary ſtyle, is ſaid to be ſacrificed to ſtudied ornament: but it ſhould be remembered by the cenſurers of Pliny, that there are beauties of art, as well as of nature: and that art, even when miſplaced, may produce an agreeable work, as nature may bring forth ſomething anomalous, which, though termed a monſter by the naturaliſts, may yet be beautiful. The peruſal of Pliny's letters excites a pleaſure more ſimilar to that which ariſes from a view of an elegant parterre, than to that which is derived from contemplating the rude beauties of uncultivated nature.

Pliny is among thoſe few ancient authors, who have been tranſlated into Engliſh without loſing much of their original grace. Lord Orrery and Mr. Melmoth ſeem to have reſembled him in their manners, as well as in their ſtyle. The taſk was natural to them, for while they expreſſed their author's ideas, they appear to have expreſſed their own. Both the tranſlations have

uncommon

uncommon merit; and, if a preference be given to Melmoth's, it muſt at the ſame time be acknowledged, that a very great ſhare of praiſe is due to that of Lord Orrery.

The panegyric of Trajan has, like the epiſtles, been cenſured as ſtiff, laboured, and affected; but if the beauties of the compoſition can excuſe the appearance of labour in the epiſtles, with much greater reaſon ought they to juſtify it in a formal oration. At an advanced period of literature, when taſte becomes too capricious and depraved to endure the graces of nature and ſimplicity, there is no reſource left for an author who would acquire popularity, but to labour in the invention of ingenious thoughts, and in beſtowing on his productions the niceſt poliſh of art. Panegyrical pieces of eloquence are commonly of all others the moſt difficult, becauſe their ſubjects are commonly of all others the moſt barren. What may be ſaid in praiſe of any man, may uſually be comprehended in few words, if naked truth and unembelliſhed facts are repreſented. Whenever, therefore, it is required, by the ceremonies of a public ſolemnity, to expatiate on the virtues of particular perſons, the orator ſoon finds himſelf under a neceſſity of ſupplying the deficiency of matter, by ingenious turns and laboured ornaments.

The compoſitions of Pliny are not likely to pleaſe the common or ſuperficial reader. Sounding periods, and animated expreſſions, are required by the vulgar, rather than the leſs obvious beauties of correctneſs and refinement. The paſſions and the imagination of thoſe, whoſe intellects and judgment are weak, are often ſtrong and lively. Their mental appetite, like their corporeal, unaccuſtomed to delicacy, learns to prefer coarſe viands to the dainties of luxury. An uncultivated mind perhaps feels, at leaſt, an equal pleaſure from the rude ballad of an itinerant ſinger, with that which ariſes to an improved taſte from the poliſhed pieces of a Horace, or an Anacreon. It is, therefore, no derogation from the merits of Pliny, that he is not univerſally admired. His elegance is too ſubtile and refined for the vulgar eye.

Though

Though great genius may be diſplayed in hewing even a rough ſtatue, or in ſketching an imperfect picture; yet the judicious connoiſſeur will always feel a pleaſure in examining thoſe works of ſculpture or painting, which have received the higheſt poliſh, and have been finiſhed with the niceſt traits of the pencil. Such writers as Homer and Shakeſpeare I muſt admire with all their imperfections on their heads; but yet, as imperfections are not of themſelves laudable, it is ſurely conſiſtent with reaſon to admire thoſe alſo, who, like Pliny, are even painfully ſolicitous to avoid them. Longinus, with all the ardour of genius, prefers faulty eminence to faultleſs mediocrity; but yet neither he, nor any other ſenſible critic, has pronounced correctneſs a fault.

It is poſſible that the judgment may approve, while the heart and imagination remain unaffected. But we read to be moved, to be entertained, to be delighted. Mere approbation is a frigid ſentiment. An animated work, therefore, which excites warm emotions, attended with occaſional diſguſt, is read in preference to another, which is inſipid, though correct, and dull, though judicious. But where genius is united with correct taſte, the judgment, the heart, and the imagination are at once fully ſatisfied. Such a combination exiſted in the minds of Pliny and Addiſon. It muſt indeed be remarked, to the honour of Addiſon, that he is far more natural than Pliny. He has all the elegance of the polite Roman, without the affectation.

"The elegance of Pliny's manners," ſays Melmoth, "adds force to the moſt intereſting, at the ſame time "that it enlivens the moſt common, ſubjects. But the "polite and ſpirited turn of his Epiſtles is, by no "means, their principal recommendation: they re-"ceive a much higher value, as they exhibit one of "the moſt amiable and animating characters in all "antiquity. Pliny's whole life ſeems to have been "employed in the exerciſe of every generous and "ſocial affection." Who then, I aſk, will not forgive the blemiſhes of his writings, eſpecially as they are ſurrounded with ſo much beauty?

No.

No. XLVI. ON THE EXPEDIENCY OF EMBELLISHING COMPOSITION WITH HARMONIOUS PERIODS, AND WITH OTHER JUDICIOUS ORNAMENTS.

THE laborious antiquary, and the dull compiler, are commonly contented with a book, however unadorned and unintereſting, if it affords information. The flowers of rhetoric they deſpiſe as meretricious artifices; and the graces of ſtyle they neglect as contributing more to embelliſhment than to ſolidity.

But the majority of readers are neither able nor deſirous to overcome that propenſity to be pleaſed, which they derive from nature. Beſides an underſtanding to conceive, an imagination to invent, and a memory to retain, they have an ear finely ſuſceptible of all the muſic of modulated periods. Compoſitions not addreſſed to the latter as well as to the former of theſe faculties, they may reject as defective. The fineſt reaſoning, and the moſt animated oratory, are attended to with diſguſt, when accompanied with diſcord. Intrinſic merit may excite approbation, but external ornament is neceſſary to give pleaſure. An accurate ſyſtem, or a well-authenticated hiſtory, however rugged the ſtyle, is valuable as a collection of materials; but cannot claim the title of a perfect compoſition, till it is poliſhed to ſuch a degree of ſmoothneſs or brilliancy as the ſpecies of writing ſeems to require.

In the rude ages of literature, the mind acquieſces in ſolid ſenſe expreſſed in unharmonious diction. An Ennius among the Romans, and a Shakeſpeare among the moderns, is admired for juſtneſs and ſublimity of conception, though the ſtyle be rugged and diſcordant. The novelty of the firſt literary productions cauſes ſo ſtrong a pleaſure in the reader's mind, that he can perceive nothing wanting to complete his ſatisfaction. His ear is unaccuſtomed to tuneful meaſures, and,

and, for want of better examples, feels a pleaſure ariſing from the harſheſt numbers. Thus the vulgar liſten with delight to the rude notes of a ballad-ſinger; while the refined ear of a connoiſſeur in muſic cannot be ſoothed but with the ſoft warbling of an Italian.

But ſucceeding writers find it neceſſary, if they hope for readers, to adopt graces unknown to their predeceſſors. They find it difficult to add novelty to the matter; becauſe, in the courſe of a few ages, every ſubject is frequently treated, and conſequently ſoon exhauſted. Syſtematical writings muſt often, from their very nature, contain nearly the ſame thoughts, connected in a ſimilar manner. In all kinds of compoſition, which either from their particular nature, or from their having been before diſcuſſed, admit of no additional invention, if novelty is neceſſary, it muſt be in the ſtyle, and not in the matter. An author, who cannot add any thing new to the philoſophy of a Bacon or a Newton, may yet deliver their thoughts in ſuch a manner, and refine their beauties with ſuch ornaments of diction, that his works may be more read than thoſe of the inventors, from whom they were derived. Fontenelle and Le Pluche have been univerſally ſtudied, while the ſources from which they drew, the works of Bacon and Boyle, are often left a prey to moths and worms in ſome deſerted library.

The books which have united delight with inſtruction, have always ſurvived thoſe which had no other aim than real utility. Dulneſs only can pore over the unintereſting page where nothing is offered to ſooth the ear, and flatter the imagination. Such ſtudy reſembles a journey over gloomy deſarts, where no ſunbeam cheers the way, no hoſpitable door invites, no enchanting proſpect alleviates the pain of fatigue. Neceſſity alone can urge the traveller over barren tracks and ſnow-topt mountains; but he treads with rapture along the fertile vales of thoſe happier climes, where every breeze is perfume, and every ſcene a picture. Hence in the repoſitories of literature, we obſerve, that bulky tomes, replete with the profoundeſt erudition, are left untouched on duſty ſhelves; while the more ſuperficial, yet more pleaſing, productions are

peruſed

peruſed with delight, and committed to memory by repetition. It is indeed a melancholy reflection, that thoſe immenſe works of learning, which coſt the labour of a life, which were produced by many an aching head and palpitating heart, and by which their authors hoped to acquire immortality, are at laſt conſigned to oblivion, becauſe external beauty is not united with intrinſic value.

Every ſpecies of compoſition has ſome end in view, which if it does not accompliſh, it falls ſhort of due perfection. The end of all hiſtorical, rhetorical, and poetical works, is to pleaſe as well as to inſtruct. If either of theſe does not comprehend every mode of pleaſing which is conſiſtent with its kind, it is faulty. Upon this plea, the advocates for rhyme, in Engliſh verſe, reſt their argument. Rhyme, ſay they, judiciouſly conducted, gives an additional power of pleaſing to the natural inherent charms of poetry. It is not to be rejected as a gothic ornament, invented by monkiſh barbariſm, and continued by a bigotted adherence to cuſtom; but is to be adopted and admired as an improvement even on claſſic verſification. In the hands of a Dryden, or a Pope, it ſooths the ear with a melody hardly excelled by a Virgil; and though no judicious critic can join Voltaire in cenſuring Shakeſpeare for not adopting rhyme (becauſe rhyme is abſurd in converſation, whether dramatic or convivial), yet every one muſt allow, that the poems of Pope would loſe much of their beauty ſhould they be deprived of rhyme, even though the ſubject matter were not to undergo the leaſt variation. We ſhould indeed find, as Horace ſays on another occaſion, the ſcattered limbs of a diſmembered poet, but we ſhould infallibly loſe all thoſe graces which reſult from melody. The bare matter, however juſt the thoughts and forcible the reaſoning, would not give the author the reputation of a great poet. The ſame remarks may be transferred to proſaic compoſition. We ſhall ſeldom liſten, unleſs the ear is charmed, while the mind is convinced.

One may compare writing to building. It is not enough to bring the ſtone from the quarry, and form it into a regular pile, in the rude ſtate in which it was produced

produced by nature. It may, indeed, however rough and unſhapen, afford a ſhelter in neceſſity, and ſerve all the purpoſes of common uſe; but will not ſtrike the eye of a paſſenger with wonder, till the chiſel in the maſter's hand ſhall have called forth each latent beauty, added the feſtoon and the Corinthian foliage, and united grace with ſtrength.

To prove how naturally we are attached to modulated compoſition, we may remark, that the firſt works of the moſt celebrated writers were poetical. The faculty of imagination is the earlieſt that diſplays itſelf in the human mind. The ardour of youth, too wild to be reſtrained by frigid rules, loves to indulge in all the licence of poetry; but as the reaſoning powers ripen, they are enabled to controul the ſallies of fancy, which, perhaps, of itſelf gradually grows chaſter and more correct. At this advanced period, the mind deſcends from the heights of poetry to proſe. But it inſenſibly and unavoidably communicates ſome of the graces of the art which it has relinquiſhed, to that which it aſſumes. A vein of poetical ore will be diſcerned not only in the thought, but in the ſtyle; which, though it will not fall into the fault of real metre, will neceſſarily flow in ſuch cadence as a poetical ear ſhall dictate and approve.

Unlearned readers ſeldom attend to the beauties of harmonious compoſition. If they are pleaſed with it, they know not whence their pleaſure ariſes. Attentive to the matter rather than the manner, they would, perhaps, think an author but ill employed, who ſhould write a long treatiſe on the art of turning a period. They would be ſurpriſed to be informed, that one of the ancient critics has acquired a great reputation by writing on an art which is converſant in ſound, rather than in ſenſe, and which is therefore, in their opinion, unimportant. Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, however, owes more of his reputation to his Treatiſe on the Structure of Words, than to any other of his works.

Nor has the art been confined to ſpeculative critics; for Cicero, a practical rhetorician, has attributed an efficacy to the harmony of periods, which experience only can prove to be real. A ſentence of no more than

than five words, he informs us, was received with universal plaudits, though, as the author of it confeſſed, their whole merit conſiſted in the ſkilful collocation. Tranſpoſe but a ſingle word, and the effect will be entirely loſt. In his elegant Dialogues on the Character of an Orator, he has entered into a curious diſquiſition on the ſubject of proſaic numbers, and ſeems to require in an oration, an exactneſs of metre almoſt equal to that of verſe. The ſubject is certainly curious, and this great rhetorician, as well as orator, has treated it with preciſion: but as the quantity of Latin words is aſcertained by rules very different from the analogy of modern languages, the ſtrictures of Cicero have no otherwiſe contributed to harmonize the periods of our writers, than by ſuggeſting the beauty and expediency of proſaic modulation.

But if his precepts have not much influence in giving this finiſhing grace to compoſitions in our own language, his example may communicate to them the moſt captivating melody. His cadences are almoſt as pleaſing to a ſuſceptible ear, as a regular piece of muſic. So neceſſary did he deem it to ſatisfy the ſenſe of hearing, that he often adds a ſynonymous and unneceſſary word to complete the roundneſs of his period. To accuſe an author, of Cicero's fame, of uſing words merely for the ſound, may, perhaps, ſurpriſe him who is not converſant in his writings; but the recollection of a few paſſages will immediately induce thoſe, who are well acquainted with his works, to acknowledge the juſtneſs of this obſervation.

But whoever would trace this harmony to its origin, muſt be referred to the Greek writers. Their numerous expletives which occur in every page, are uſed almoſt ſolely to fill up chaſms in the cadence, and to render the harmony full and perfect. Some critics have, indeed, attempted to point out the ſignification of every particle in every paſſage; but their ill ſucceſs, after all their diligence, tends to confirm the preceding poſition.

The periods of Plato are the models of Cicero. A good ear, on a curſory compariſon of a few ſentences, cannot

cannot but obſerve how well the Roman orator has imitated the Greek philoſopher.

It may be reaſonably conjectured, that one cauſe why thoſe ancient writers, who have come down to us entire, ſurvived their cotemporaries, may be, that they extended their attention beyond copiouſneſs and ſolidity to pleaſing ſound and modulated cadence.

Among all our late writers, none appear to me ſo capable of pleaſing an *attic ear* as the late Mr. Harris, of Saliſbury. In his Philological Inquiries he has treated the ſubject on which I now ſpeak, with peculiar accuracy and elegance.

No. XLVII. ON THE PREVAILING TASTE FOR THE OLD ENGLISH POETS.

THE antiquarian ſpirit, which was once confined to enquiries concerning the manners, the buildings, the records, and the coins of the ages that preceded us, has now extended itſelf to thoſe poetical compoſitions which were popular among our forefathers, but which have gradually ſunk into oblivion through the decay of language, and the prevalence of a correct and poliſhed taſte. Books printed in the black letter are ſought for with the ſame avidity with which the Engliſh antiquary peruſes a monumental inſcription, or treaſures up a Saxon piece of money. The popular ballad compoſed by ſome illiterate minſtrel, and which has been handed down by tradition for ſeveral centuries, is reſcued from the hands of the vulgar, to obtain a place in the collection of the man of taſte. Verſes, which, a few years paſt, were thought worthy the attention of children only, or of the loweſt and rudeſt orders, are now admired for that artleſs ſimplicity, which once obtained the name of coarſeneſs and vulgarity.

It muſt be confeſſed, that this ſpecies of antiquarianiſm is better calculated for the public in general than any other. An old ruſty coin or ſhield would excite rapture in a Swinton or Rawlinſon, but would be beheld

held with perfect indifference by the greater part of the literati, and by all the unlearned. But the genuine beauties of poetry are capable of being reliſhed by thoſe who are perfectly regardleſs whether or not it was printed in the black letter, and written by Rowley or by Chatterton. Every lover of poetry is pleaſed with the judicious ſelection of Percy, though he gives himſelf little concern about dates. The antiquary may perhaps admire the oldeſt and the worſt piece in the collection, only becauſe it is old. The common reader, however, does often partake with the antiquarian in the pleaſure reſulting from labour beſtowed in reſearches after poetry, though he has no adequate idea of the ſupreme felicity of finding an Otho.

The mere antiquarian taſte in poetry, or the admiration of *bad* poetry merely becauſe it is ancient, is certainly abſurd. It is more difficult to diſcover the meaning of many of our old poets, diſguiſed as it is in an obſolete and uncouth phraſeology, than to read an elegant Greek or Latin author. Such ſtudy is, indeed, not unfrequently, like raking in a dunghill for pearls, and gaining the labour only for one's pains.

Our earlier poets, many of whoſe names and works are deſervedly forgotten, ſeem to have thought that rhyme was poetry. And even this conſtituent requiſite they applied with extreme negligence. It was, however, good enough for its readers; moſt of whom conſidered the mere ability of reading as a very high attainment. It has had its day, and the antiquary muſt not deſpiſe us, if we cannot peruſe it with patience. He who delights in all ſuch reading as is never read, may derive ſome pleaſure from the ſingularity of his taſte; but he ought ſtill to reſpect the judgment of mankind, which has conſigned to oblivion the works which he admires. While he pores unmoleſted on Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate, and Occleve, let him not cenſure our obſtinacy in adhering to Homer, Virgil, Milton, and Pope.

In peruſing the antiquated pages of our Engliſh bards we ſometimes find a paſſage which has comparative merit, and which ſhines with the greater luſtre, becauſe it is ſurrounded with deformity. While we

conſider

conſider the rude ſtate of literature, the want of models, the depraved taſte of readers, we are ſtruck with the leaſt appearance of beauty. We are flattered with an idea of our own penetration, in diſcovering excellencies which have eſcaped the notice of the world. We take up the volume with a previous determination, to prove that it contains valuable matter. We are unwilling that our pains ſhould be unrewarded. We ſelect a few lines from a long work, and by a little critical refinement, prove that they are wonderfully excellent. But the candid are ready to confeſs, that they have not often diſcovered in this department a ſufficient degree or quantity of abſolute merit to repay the labour of a profound reſearch.

Rowe has ſaid, that the old Engliſh bards and minſtrels ſoared many a height above their followers; and it is true, that thoſe old ballads, which are in the mouths of peaſants on both ſides the Tweed, have ſomething in them irreſiſtibly captivating. Vulgar, coarſe, inelegant, they yet touch the heart. Many of them, when read, as the writers intended, are muſical. They have pleaſed the ear and the mind of a whole people, and therefore, in ſpite of the cold feelings of the critic, muſt be pronounced beautiful. Addiſon firſt gained them the notice of ſcholars, by his praiſes of Chevy-Chaſe. He illuſtrated their beauties, by comparing them with the Claſſics. This indeed drew the attention of the claſſical reader; but it may be queſtioned, whether it would not be a better method to view them as originals; and in order to procure them a general reception, appeal to the genuine feelings of nature. For, in truth, when compared as compoſitions, with the correct works of Virgil or Horace, the barbarous language in which they are written makes them appear to diſadvantage. At the ſame time it muſt be confeſſed, that it affords a very pleaſing employment to the polite ſcholar, to remark the coincidencies of thought, which are uſually found in works of genius, written at different periods by thoſe who could not poſſibly imitate each other. The philoſopher gladly ſeizes the phenomenon, as it tends to elucidate a curious truth reſpecting the human mind, that

that all men of nearly equal faculties, fall into nearly the same train of thought when placed in similar circumstances.

Notwithstanding the incontrovertible merit of many of our antient relics of poetry, I believe it may be doubted, whether any one of them would be tolerated as the production of a modern poet. As a good imitation of the antient manner it would find its admirers; but, considered independently as an original, it would be thought a careless, vulgar, inartificial composition. There are few who do not read Dr. Percy's own piece, and those of other late writers, with more pleasure, than the oldest ballad in the collection of that ingenious writer.

Poetical genius appeared with great lustre among the Scots, at a time when it was obscured in England. At one of the barrenest periods of English literature, Dunbar, Douglas, and Lyndsay, wrote with great elegance, as far as the language would admit, in the true spirit of original poetry. They wanted only a better language, and a more durable dialect, to have become national classics. With all their beauties, it is difficult to read them with patience; for the necessity of continually recurring to a glossary, cools the ardour which the perusal of a beautiful passage may have excited, and induces the tired reader to fly to more modern books, whose gold, equally pure, may be extracted without the trouble of an analytical process.

The present age, it must be owned with regret, is an age of literary deception. It is indeed characteristical of an advanced period of letters and refinement, when the various modes of writing have, in every department, been anticipated, to have recourse to forgery in order to gain attention. Of this every one acquainted with the present state of literature in England is sensible. Chatterton, though the best, is not the only imitator and pretended restorer of our antient poets.

It will be allowed by all, that a composition ought to be estimated by its absolute, not its relative merit. And yet a poem, which, while it is supposed to have been written three or four centuries ago, is generally

read and admired, is neglected as soon as it is discovered to be a modern production. This seems to have been the case with the reputed poems of Rowley. That a work should lose its value in the eyes of the antiquary, when it is found to wear only a counterfeited rust, is not wonderful; but it might reasonably be supposed, that a man of taste would continue to admire it even after the detection. Though at the same time it is true, that most men have so much of the antiquarian spirit as to feel an additional pleasure when excellence is united with antiquity. By an effort of imagination, we place ourselves in the age of the author, and call up a thousand collateral ideas, which give beauties to his work not naturally inherent.

Whether the antiquarian taste in poetry is reasonable or unreasonable, it affords an elegant and a pleasing amusement to those who possess it. Mistakes in matters of mere taste and literature are harmless in their consequences to society. They have no direct tendency to hurt any interest, or corrupt any morals. While therefore they are not likely to become general, they must not be attacked with virulence. Disputes in the republic of letters; a republic, unlike the political commonwealth, should be conducted with gentleness. That humanity of temper, which a successful pursuit of learning inspires, would, of itself, it might be supposed, secure a mild and generous behaviour in literary controversy. But the reverse has usually been the case. Bentley, Middleton, Warburton, have sometimes indulged an irritable temper beyond those limits, which, as christians and scholars, they must have seen and approved. They who have observed the rancour mutually displayed in the disagreements of the learned, must have concluded, if they knew not the state of the question, that something of the utmost consequence to life, fame, or fortune, was at stake. Contempt or indignation must have taken place, when they found that nothing more was agitated, than the propriety or impropriety of Greek accents, the genuineness of some foolish book, the justness of a conjectural emendation, and other subjects, which had not the least tendency to promote or injure either science or society.

No.

No. XLVIII. ON THE MORAL EFFECTS OF PAINTING AND PRINTS.

EVERY thing which is capable of affecting the mind in a forcible manner may be rendered subservient to the purposes of morality. Music, and indeed all the sister arts, are known to possess a power of exciting sentiments of various kinds; of rousing the mind to manly virtue, or relaxing it to vice and effeminacy. But perhaps none are more instantaneous or subtile in their operation than the productions of the art of painting. Every one who can see, is able to collect the meaning of an obvious picture, and the transition from the eyes to the heart is short and rapid. To receive an impression from a book, it is necessary to read and to reflect, but the idea suggested by a painting is caught at a glance.

A liberal and philosophical statesman, whose comprehensive mind attends to the morals no less than the finances of a nation, will consider the public exhibition of pictures as a matter of national concern. He will use his influence to cause such figures to be represented to the public, as have a natural tendency to call forth manly sentiments, to diffuse a love of decency and order, a spirit of benevolence, honour, honesty, and patriotic virtue. Divines and philosophers, warriors and statesmen, useful writers, and good men of all denominations, represented with all the charms of the pencil, and with all the natural expression of their countenances, cannot fail to animate the bosom with a love of excellence. And it is one peculiar advantage, that this effect may be produced on the rude and the vulgar, on those who have never been improved by education, and who are neither able nor inclined to improve themselves by reading and reflection. The encouragement of the arts is indeed attended with a considerable expence; but while they are made by due direction to improve the minds of the

people, they amply repay it. When they are ſo perverted as to produce unmanly ſentiments, or vicious and idle habits, they are, at once, the bane of private life and of a free conſtitution.

The world never yet ſaw the equal of our countryman Hogarth, in the art of moral painting. The ſcenes, indeed, which he has exhibited, are taken, for the moſt part, though not always, from low life; but in this reſpect the painter ſhewed his judgment; not only becauſe low life affords a greater abundance and variety of humour, but becauſe low life ſtands moſt in need of inſtruction, and can receive it more eaſily from a picture than from oral or written documents. I very much doubt, whether the ſermons of a Tillotſon ever diſſuaded ſo efficaciouſly from luſt, cruelty, and intemperance, as the prints of a Hogarth.

The painters of the Dutch or Flemiſh ſchool do indeed repreſent low life; but the repreſentations are rather amuſing than inſtructive. Indeed, I am not ſure that they are not injurious to mankind; for while they exhibit men in ſome of the loweſt and moſt humiliating forms, they tend to encreaſe his real degradation. It is much to be lamented, that the great ſkill which they evidently diſplay in the art of painting, was not employed in ſubjects more ſuſceptible of elevation.

Humorous pictures or prints are, however, too entertaining to be rejected, while they are reſtrained within the limits of decency and good-nature. The taſte for them is, in this age and country, very prevalent; but I am ſorry to ſay, that the limits which we have juſt mentioned are too little obſerved. Among the various methods invented for the gratification of private and party malice, few have been more ſucceſsful than the caricatura. There is no perſonage however exalted, nor character however reſpectable, which may not be lowered in the eſtimation of the vulgar, by a ludicrous picture exhibited to public view. Some action, paſſion, feature, attitude, or dreſs, may be applied to the moſt deſerving man, and may render him an object of ridicule. A moſt unjuſt perverſion of a noble art; but which, it is to be feared, will continue

tinue while the public is led by its taste for detraction to reward the artist by the purchase of his works, however defamatory.

Humorous prints have been of late very successfully used to ridicule some of those extravagancies of dress and manners, which arise from effeminacy of manners, and tend to increase it. The figures represented have raised a very natural and innocent laugh, and the satire, though well pointed and directed, has not usually been personal. Nothing can be more laudable, than to exert this very efficacious art in rendering folly, vanity and vice, objects of derision.

But it must be confessed, that it is much oftener employed in corrupting the heart and imagination by indecent figures. And here I cannot help making a complaint against the police of the metropolis, which allows some of the shops in the most crowded streets to exhibit, in their windows, such prints as cannot fail to enflame the passions of inexperienced youth. Why slumbers the magistrate, or to what purpose are the laws and wise regulations of a civilized state, if we cannot permit our children to walk through the public streets of the capital without danger of corrupting their morals, merely by their looking into a window, which is so furnished as to attract the attention of the most innocent and unsuspicious? A great and successive crowd is usually assembled before the print-shops, which, while it annoys the honest passenger who is hastening to transact important business, is perpetually drinking in a poisonous draught, of which who can tell how malignant and diffusive may be the consequences? Indeed, the print-shops, which display to thousands in the course of every day the most inflammatory prints, may justly be stigmatised as the guides to the brothel. In ancient times, and in heathen cities, we read of the utmost precautions taken to preserve the modesty of young men; and ought not the rulers of the greatest city in the Christian world to blush, while they connive at a practice, which tends, perhaps more than any thing else, to debauch the minds of apprentices, clerks, and indeed of all the rising generation? It is certainly a nuisance, and may legally be removed.

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The intereſt of ſome unconſcientious, individual might perhaps be injured by leſſening the ſale of his corrupting repreſentations; but what is the intereſt of an individual, when put in competition with the morals of the multitude? If the print-ſhops in a great city were to exhibit only virtuous prints, they might be highly ſerviceable to the cauſe of morality.

The ſerious part of mankind have complained, that ſome of the catchpenny periodical publications have of late been embelliſhed, as it is called, with ſuch prints as tend immediately to corrupt private life, and moſt eſſentially to injure ſociety. Neither have they appeared clandeſtinely, but have boldly ſolicited notice by a deſcription of their contents in the public advertiſements. The ſerious part of mankind have; I ſay, complained, and have aſked each other, whether the official guardians of religion and decency have been ſo immerſed in politics, or ſo engaged in purſuit of preferment, as not to have noticed publications which they ought, if they poſſeſſed ſufficient influence, to have ſuppreſſed? They who have ſons and daughters cannot but apprehend danger, when the moſt licentious pictures are daily obtruded on the public eye; and they cannot help thinking, at the ſame time, that the preſervation of the children of the commonwealth deſerves at leaſt as much attention from the legiſlature, as the preſervation of hares and puppies.

The art of painting is one of thoſe innocent and delightful means of pleaſure, which Providence has kindly afforded to brighten the proſpects of human life. Under due reſtrictions, and with proper direction, it may be rendered ſomething more than an elegant mode of pleaſing the eye and the imagination; it may become a very powerful auxiliary of virtue.

It is but juſt to add, that, ſoon after this paper was printed, but before it was publiſhed, the magiſtrates of London iſſued orders for the proſecution of ſuch printſellers as ſhould exhibit licentious prints in their windows.

No. XLIX. ON THE IMPROPRIETY OF PUBLICLY ADOPTING A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE.

THE tranſlators of our Bible, it is allowed, had great merit; but, as nothing is begun and perfected at the ſame time, it is not ſurpriſing that the tranſlation is not exempt from the characteriſtic of all human undertakings. Critics, aſſiſted by the labours of the tranſlators, have proſecuted their inquiries into the Hebrew text, and have detected errors in it which they are willing to magnify into importance. Manuſcripts having been collated, and the Hebrew text at laſt aſcertained, as far as human ingenuity can aſcertain it, there ſeems, at the completion of the labour, to be a wiſh among the critics for a new tranſlation.

For my own part, if I may venture to give an opinion contrary to that of the profound collators of Hebrew manuſcripts, I cannot help thinking a new tranſlation of the Bible an attempt extremely dangerous, and quite unneceſſary. Inſtead of ſerving the cauſe of religion, which is the oſtenſible motive for the wiſh, I am convinced that nothing would more immediately tend to ſhake the baſis of the eſtabliſhment.

Time gives a venerable air to all things, to men, to trees, to buildings, and to books. Sacred things acquire peculiar ſanctity by long duration. A new church, with all the embelliſhments of Grecian architecture, is far leſs venerable than the Gothic tower overgrown with moſs. The preſent tranſlation of the Bible derives an advantage from its antiquity greatly ſuperior to any which could ariſe from the correction of its inaccuracies. Imagine a Roman ſenator or warrior, dreſſed out like a powdered beau of modern times. Much more care is beſtowed on him in his preſent dreſs. He is nicely and accurately arrayed in every part. But what is the reſult? He is now pretty, and before he was majeſtic. Juſt ſo, were the Bible corrected

rected and modernized, it would probably become more ſhewy, and perhaps quite exact; but it would loſe that air of ſanctity, which enables it to make an impreſſion which no accuracy could produce.

We have received the Bible in the very words in which it now ſtands from our fathers; we have learned many paſſages of it by heart in our infancy; we find it quoted in ſermons from the earlieſt to the lateſt times; ſo that its phraſe is become familiar to our ear, and we ceaſe to be ſtartled at apparent difficulties. Let all this be called prejudice; but it is a prejudice which univerſally prevails in the middle and lower ranks; and we ſhould hardly recognize the Bible, were it to be read in our churches in any other words than thoſe which our fathers heard before us.

It is true, indeed, that ſome very devout and well-meaning people carry the prejudice too far, when they profeſs to believe, that our tranſlation was written with the finger of the Almighty, and that to alter a tittle of it is to be guilty of blaſphemy. But ſtill, as the faith of ſuch perſons is ſtrong, and their intentions pious, it would be imprudent to ſhock their minds by an innovation, which they could not help conſidering as an inſult on heaven. If the leſſons in the church were to be read in different words from thoſe which they have heard from their infancy, their faith might be more endangered than by all the arguments of the deiſts. And ſuch perſons, though the ſarcaſtic may ſtigmatiſe them as weak brethren, are too valuable members, eſpecially in this age, to be wantonly cut off from the body of the church.

But forbearing to urge the air of veneration acquired by time, or the attachments formed by prejudice to the Bible, I cannot help thinking, that the preſent tranſlation ought to be retained in our churches for its intrinſic beauty and excellence. We have had one ſpecimen of a new tranſlation of the Bible by a very learned and ingenious biſhop. It is exact and curious; but I will venture to ſay it approaches not to the majeſty, ſublimity, and fire of the old tranſlation. A reader, after going through it, will not upon the whole receive ſo deep and laſting an impreſſion from it, as from

from the old one with all its imperfections. And it is from the general effect of a work that its excellence muſt be eſtimated.

The poetical paſſages of ſcripture are peculiarly pleaſing in the preſent tranſlation. The language, though it is ſimple and natural, is rich and expreſſive. Solomon's Song, difficult as it is to be interpreted, may be read with delight, even if we attend to little elſe but the brilliancy of the diction; and it is a circumſtance which increaſes its grace, that it appears to be quite unſtudied. The Pſalms, as well as the whole Bible, are literally tranſlated, and yet that tranſlation abounds with paſſages exquiſitely beautiful and irreſiſtibly tranſporting. Even where the ſenſe is not very clear, nor the connection of ideas obvious at firſt ſight, the mind is ſoothed, and the ear raviſhed, with the powerful yet unaffected charms of the ſtyle. It is not indeed neceſſary to enlarge on the excellencies of the tranſlation in general; for its beauties are ſuch as are to be recognized by feeling more than by deſcription, and it muſt be owned, that they have been powerfully felt by the majority of the nation ever ſince the firſt edition. In many a cottage and farm-houſe, where the Bible and Prayer-Book conſtitute the library, the ſweet ſongs of Judah, and the entertaining hiſtories of Joſeph and his brethren, Saul and Jonathan, conſtitute a never-failing ſource of heart-felt pleaſure.

It is falſe refinement, vain philoſophy, and an immoderate love of diſſipation, which cauſes ſo little attention to be paid to this venerable book in the buſy and gay world. If we do not diſclaim all belief in its contents, it is ſurely a great omiſſion in many gentlemen and ladies who wiſh to be completely accompliſhed, or think themſelves ſo already, to be utterly unacquainted with the ſacred volume. It is our duty to inſpect it, and it is graciouſly ſo ordered, that our duty in this inſtance may be a pleaſure; for the Bible is truly pleaſing, conſidered only as a collection of very ancient and curious hiſtory and poetry.

With reſpect to the impropriety of appointing a new tranſlation to be read in churches, what I have advanced on the ſubject is only matter of opinion, and

may perhaps be found in the event erroneous. I ſhall, however, very confidently ſay, that innovations of this kind are of the higheſt importance, and may probably be attended with the moſt violent concuſſions. They ought therefore to be attempted only when there is an abſolute neceſſity for them, and after the matureſt deliberation.

No. L. ON THE MULTIPLICATION OF BOOKS.

NO amuſements are more eaſily attainable, and attended with more ſolid ſatisfaction and fewer inconveniencies, than the literary. In theſe late ages, there is ſcarcely a ſubject, which can reaſonably excite human curioſity, on which ſatisfactory information may not be acquired by the peruſal of books, which, from their multitude, are obvious to all who are diſpoſed to give them their attention. Poetry, hiſtory, eloquence, and philoſophy in all its ramifications, are conſtantly at hand, and ready to gratify the mental appetite with every elegant variety of intellectual ſuſtenance. The imagination can at all times call up, by the medium of books, the moſt vivid repreſentations of every object, which the phyſical and moral world have been known to produce. Exempt from the inconveniencies of foreign travel, from the dangers of a military life, from the narrow eſcapes of the voyager, and from the tumult of political engagements, the ſtudent can enjoy, in the comfortable retreat of his library, all that has employed the active faculties of man in every department of life.

As a ſource of a very lively, as well as a pure pleaſure, reading is become the conſtant amuſement of that conſiderable part of the community, whom the circumſtances of profeſſion, ſex, or inclination, have confined to a ſedentary life. The age is ſaid to be diſſipated, and the moſt ſuperficial obſervation will juſtify the complaint. Yet it muſt, on the other hand, be acknowledged, that it is moſt extenſively enlightened.

Books,

Books, that poſſeſs originality and real merit, are ſtill encouraged. Circulating libraries, furniſhed with valuable as well as trifling works, and ſocieties eſtabliſhed for the purchaſe of new publications, abound throughout the kingdom. The ſtream of national knowledge is certainly diffuſe; nor is there ſufficient reaſon to aſſert, what ſome have maintained, that it is become ſhallow by diffuſion. If the productions of thoſe who have gone before are richer and more ſolid, it reflects not diſgrace on their followers, whoſe diſcoveries are anticipated by the firſt inveſtigators. He who firſt opens the mine, will return laden with treaſure at an eaſy rate. He who ſucceeds may, with more ſagacity and labour, acquire leſs; nor ſhould it detract from his praiſe, that he brings forth little where little remained.

In this advanced ſtage of literature, much of the ſtudent's life is neceſſarily employed in retracing the progreſs of thoſe who have preceded him. He heaps up knowledge, and has often little time, even if he has inclination and ability, to communicate it in a correct and graceful manner. There is little doubt, but that many of the literati, who have never written, are at leaſt equal in the extent of their knowledge to the writers whom they ſtudy and admire. They have never written, perhaps, from indolence, and perhaps from a want of a power to utter, with agreeable facility, what they apprehend with clearneſs. Theſe muſt be ſupplied with a conſtant ſucceſſion of books; and it is found by experience, that few books pleaſe more cordially, or at leaſt excite attention more forcibly, than thoſe of contemporary authors. It appears then, that, for the ſake of the learned as well as the common reader, the multiplication of books, though it has ſometimes been lamented, ought, upon the whole, to be encouraged. No one is compelled to read what he does not approve. A ſumptuous entertainment is prepared, nor ſhould the gueſt find fault with the number or variety of the diſhes. They are all laid before him with deſign to give him pleaſure, and it is eaſy to ſelect that which is capable of affording it, and to refuſe all that is inſipid or diſguſtful.

Modern

Modern authors are naturally diſpoſed to juſtify to themſelves and others the addition which they make to the number of books. They are unwilling to ſuppoſe, that every ſubject is anticipated; that all the avenues to fame are cloſed; that the knowledge acquired by ſtudy, and adorned by the expreſſion of genius, is incapable of obtaining its proper reward, the praiſe of every ingenuous and congenial mind. Literary productions continue, therefore, to multiply, and every writer finds ſome plauſible apology for preſenting to the public an additional volume.

No. LI. LETTERS THE SOURCE OF SOLID CONSOLATION.

THE ſacred writers, the heathen philoſophers, all who have either thought or written with ſolidity, have agreed that man is born to trouble, and that few and evil are his days. The moral poet Euripides has ſaid, that to be a Man is a ſufficient plea for being miſerable; and who indeed has not felt this truth?

Yet it is at the ſame time true, that the kind hand of Providence has ſcattered flowers as well as thorns in the road of life; and the great ſkill required, is to ſelect thoſe that are perennial, thoſe that do not bud, blow, and wither in a day, from thoſe that ſhine with tranſient luſtre, or conceal poiſonous qualities under a vivid foliage.

Among the many arguments for a claſſical and comprehenſive education, there are few which ought to have a greater weight, than that it enables thoſe who enjoy the benefit of it, to derive the pureſt, the ſweeteſt, the moſt elegant, and the leaſt injurious pleaſures from themſelves and from reflection. The man of taſte and learning creates, as it were, a little world of his own, in which he exerciſes his faculties; and he feels his moſt exalted ſatisfactions ariſing from things, the exiſtence of which is ſcarcely known to the vulgar mind.

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The parent in the middle ranks of life, who is able to place his ſon above dependence, contributes more to his real happineſs, when he gives him a taſte for the claſſics, and for ſtudies which will exalt his nature, than when, by making him a trader without a gentleman's education, he affords him an opportunity of hereafter ſhining in the mean magnificence of wealth, unaccompanied with elegance and liberality. To poſſeſs thouſands with the narrow ſpirit of a mere ſtock-jobber, can add but little real happineſs. But to poſſeſs a juſt taſte for a Virgil, and for the other fine writers whom the world has long admired; to be capable of feeling their beauties, with only the common comforts and conveniencies of life, will confer an elegance and dignity of mind; and will cauſe a finer pleaſure than was ever known to a Craſſus or a Clive.

Where, indeed, ſhall we find objects capable of attaching the mind in every ſtage of life, in every condition, in every time, in every place, but in the walks of literature? Theſe ſtudies, ſays Cicero, in a paſſage which can never be too often repeated, afford nouriſhment to our youth, delight our old age, adorn proſperity, ſupply a refuge in adverſity, are a conſtant ſource of pleaſure at home, are no impediment while abroad, attend us in the night-ſeaſon, and accompany us in our travels and retirements. The great ſtateſman ſpoke the dictates of his own experience. To his hours of dejection and privacy, we owe many of his fineſt philoſophical treatiſes, in the compoſition of which he a while forgot his own and his country's calamity.

Deep ſorrow is known to ſeek ſolitude for indulgence. Company may diſſipate the lighter cares, but it appears like mockery to real woe. Add to this, that to mix with company while under the influence of grief, unleſs it is the company of familiar friends, is a violation of the rules of propriety, ſince it tends to throw a damp on that chearfulneſs, to promote which is one of the ends of ſociety. But ſolitude invites to reading; and amid the great variety of books, ſome one may always be found in uniſon with our own temper. In the retirements of our library, no inſolent intruder can upbraid

upbraid us for diſinclination or incapacity to taſte convivial enjoyment. There we may find balſam for every wound of the mind, and a lenient medicine for every diſeaſe.

When the proſpects which preſent themſelves in the common road of life are dark and dreary, the man of taſte can ſtep aſide into the elyſium of poeſy, and tread the flowery paths, and view the gilded ſcenes which fancy raiſes with the magic of enchantment. The ingenious biographer of the poet Gray has informed us, that the moſt approved productions of his friend were brought forth ſoon after the death of one whom the poet loved. Sorrow led him to ſeek for ſolace of the muſe. That the muſe ſmiled on her votary, every reader of taſte has already acknowledged. Sacred hiſtory has acquainted us with the power of muſic over the paſſions, and there is little doubt but the verſe as well as the lyre of David, can ſooth the troubled ſpirits to repoſe.

It is difficult to be attached to the common objects of human purſuit, without feeling the ſordid or the troubleſome paſſions. But in the purſuits of learning, all is liberal, noble, generous. They require and promote that comprehenſive mode of thinking, which overlooks the little and mean occupations of the vulgar mind. To the man of philoſophical obſervation, the world appears as a theatre, in which the buſy actors toil and weary themſelves for his amuſement. He ſees the emptineſs of many objects which are ardently purſued; he is acquainted with the falſe glitter that ſurrounds him; he knows how ſhort and unſubſtantial are the good and evil that excite all the ardour of purſuit and abhorrence; and can therefore derive a degree of delight from reflection, of which they who are deeply, and even ſucceſsfully intereſted in them, can never participate. Notwithſtanding the charms of opulence, yet have Socrates and Epictetus attracted more admirers, and probably enjoyed more tranquillity of mind, than the richeſt publican of Athens and Rome.

It is true, that learning ſhould be purſued as a qualification for the ſeveral profeſſions of civil life; but excluding the motives of intereſt and ambition, it is

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to be cultivated for its own ſake, by thoſe who underſtand and wiſh to enjoy, under every circumſtance, the utmoſt attainable happineſs. Next to religion, it is the beſt and ſweeteſt ſource of comfort in thoſe hours of dejection, which every mortal muſt ſometimes experience. It conſtitutes one of the moſt ſolid pillars to ſupport the tottering fabric of human felicity, and commonly contributes as much to virtue as to happineſs.

No. LII. ON THE EXCELLENCE OF LORD BACON AS A MORALIST.

NO acts are ſo truly our own as thoſe of the underſtanding. The world has long agreed in admiration of Alexander, Cæſar, and Charles of Sweden; and the remark of Cicero ſeems not to have occurred to them, that the glory of a general is in great meaſure derived from the merit of thoſe who obey him, and that a thouſand contingencies muſt conſpire, to give efficacy to the beſt concerted plans of military operation.

But the works of genius are commonly produced in ſolitude. The mind forms its own deſign, and purſues within itſelf all the methods that conduce to its accompliſhment. Fortune has little influence in retarding or promoting its purpoſes. If, then, the proportion of glory, which ought to redound to an individual, is to be eſtimated by perſonal merit, independently of external aid and accidental events, the triumphs of ingenuity muſt be held more honourable than the triumphs of valour, and a conqueſt of the intellectual world more worthy the dignified page of hiſtory, than the ſubjection of the terraqueous globe. Such a conqueror is the great Bacon; and when the world ſhall have corrected its erroneous judgment, he will be placed in a rank ſuperior to the ſon of Philip.

A popular hiſtorian of England has, however, depreciated the merit of this glory of our nation. Hume has

has plainly pronounced him inferior to the Florentine philoſopher Galilæo; and he attributes the great applauſe that has been paid to him, to the illiberal partiality of our national ſpirit. Something more reaſonable than the ſuggeſtions of this ſpirit will prompt many to attribute his detraction to national envy.

The teſtimony of foreigners, who cannot be biaſſed by this prejudice, is truly honourable to our great philoſopher. Baco Verulamius, for ſo they call him, is more frequently mentioned, and with higher applauſe, than the ingenious philoſopher of Italy. Great as have been the praiſes beſtowed on Bacon in his own country, they have never reached the high encomiums of foreign univerſities.

It was the great miſtake of Ariſtotle to have accommodated his phyſics to his logic, inſtead of rendering his logic ſubſervient to his phyſics; and, as the critics have obſerved, by inverting the natural order of things, to have ſubjected the end to the means. To remove this error, our philoſopher invented his *novum organum*, in which he teaches to reaſon by induction; a more effectual method of eliciting truth, than the antiquated and trifling forms of a perfect ſyllogiſm. This work is acknowledged to be his maſter-piece; and the beneficial effect it has had in aſcertaining ſcience, by reducing it to the teſt of experiment, is alone ſufficient to entitle him to all the fame he enjoys.

But his predominant excellence in promoting the ſcience of nature, ſeems almoſt to have abſorbed his glory as a moraliſt. His genius, however, formed to penetrate into all ſubjects on which it directed its beams, made thoſe diſcoveries in common life and common manners, which, it might be ſuppoſed, would be leſs likely to occur to the deep and recluſe ſpeculator than to the man of buſineſs. In all his moral writings there is a ſolidity of remark, which enables the reader to ſelect ſomething uſeful on every peruſal. It is this original and ſubſtantial excellence, which gives a grace to his writings, not to be deformed by a ſtyle by no means uniformly elegant; though Sir Richard Baker, whoſe taſte, however, was not equal to his knowledge, aſſerts of it, that Bacon has written

in

in ſo ſweet a ſtyle, that, like manna, it pleaſes every palate.

Men of profound ſcience commonly excel more in judgment than in wit. But Bacon is acknowledged to have diſplayed a very conſiderable degree of wit in his moral lucubrations. Rapin ſays, there is more of it in his ethics, than in any of his writings; for which, I think, a reaſon may eaſily be aſſigned. Obſervations on men and manners admit a playful ingenuity of thought; but the features of ſevere ſcience are not often to be relaxed by the ſallies of a ſportive fancy.

I have often regretted, that ſo ſagacious an underſtanding was not more frequently employed in ſpeculations more generally uſeful, than thoſe ſublime ſubjects of ſcience which are unconnected with practice. Had he employed that ſubtilty of obſervation, in remarking and deſcribing manners, which is conſpicuous in ſome uſeleſs conjectures in natural philoſophy, there is little doubt but the world would have received great light, where light is moſt wanted, in the art of regulating our paſſions, and the conduct of life. The little he has left us is an invaluable treaſure; and the work I ſhould moſt wiſh to recover, if all his productions were loſt, is the Moral Eſſays.

The Advancement of Learning, though much leſs read than the ſuperficial works of later times, is one of the moſt entertaining and improving books in the language. The remarks in it ſtrike the mind with ſuch an evidence of conviction, that the truth diſcovered pleaſes like that derived from mathematical demonſtration. The thoughts of Bacon have this peculiar excellence, that they not only pleaſe and convince by their juſtneſs, but lead the mind to think ſtill farther on the ſubject, and aſſiſt it in its efforts. Not like the trifling writer, who is forced to make the moſt advantage of a good idea by dilating it, as the goldbeater extends a little gold; Bacon leaves the reader to comment on a ſolid reflection, when he has once given it utterance in a clear and conciſe expreſſion.

His reputation as an hiſtorian, though great during his life, ſeems gradually to have declined, and is now nearly loſt. His Reign of Henry the Seventh is only read

read by thoſe whoſe veneration for him induces them to acquaint themſelves with all his works.

Whatever defects the prevalence of a bad taſte may have occaſioned in ſome of his productions, we may compare them all together to a venerable pile of Gothic architecture, which, though it has not to boaſt the grace of Grecian elegance, or the finery of the Chineſe ſtyle, poſſeſſes a ſolidity and ſubſtance, which will cauſe it to endure when not one ſtone ſhall be left upon another in the edifices of a more refined or oſtentatious taſte.

When we compare this great man's writings with ſome of the weakneſſes of his life, we are tempted to exclaim with a modern delineator of characters, Alas, poor human nature!

No. LIII. ON THE CHOICE OF A PROFESSION.

MUCH has been ſaid on the neceſſity of diſcovering the genius at a puerile age, and of conſulting nature in the choice of a profeſſion. Yet, after all, chance uſually determines the boy's deſtination.

It is, indeed, by no means eaſy to find in the child the diſtinguiſhing excellence of the future man. The mind, in the courſe of a few years, appears to undergo a total renovation. Different faculties, like different trees, put forth the bloſſoms which preſage the fruit, at earlier or later periods, according to ſome interior arrangement, which eludes reſearch. They who have taken the moſt pains to learn the natural propenſity of the young mind, and have been led by ſome ſtriking appearance to chuſe a future employment for it, have found their pupils no more ſkilful or ſucceſsful, than thoſe who were directed to the ſame plan merely by fortuitous circumſtances. Few parents, and few ſuperintendants of education, are capable of forming this judgment; a judgment that muſt proceed from an intimate knowledge of the human heart, and a long experience

experience of the changes produced in it by time and accidents.

But it is leſs difficult to diſcover the advantages and diſadvantages of the various employments of life, than to point out thoſe who are formed by nature to fill them with honour.

The clerical profeſſion ſeems to be well adapted to promote the happineſs of him who can command his paſſions, and who is of a contented diſpoſition. Such an one is a Chriſtian philoſopher, and poſſeſſes the agreeable privilege of inſtructing his fellow creatures in moral, philoſophical, and religious truths. He is at liberty to purſue one of the pleaſanteſt and the moſt tranquil paths of life, that which leads through the quiet, yet diverſified regions of learning. He is uſually reſpected much more than thoſe whoſe birth and fortunes have placed them in a higher ſphere. He is more a maſter of his time, that invaluable poſſeſſion, than the reſt of the buſy world, becauſe his engagements are at an appointed ſeaſon. But if to accumulate money, either from the neceſſity of providing for a family, or from avarice, be his object, he will find himſelf miſerable, becauſe he is placed in a ſituation, where his deſire cannot often be gratified with eaſe and honour. The ſtipends of the moſt uſeful part of the clergy, thoſe who officiate, are often not greater than the earnings of a hireling mechanic. Yet an appearance of a competency muſt be ſupported by the curate, not from pride alone, but from a laudable deſire of accompliſhing the purpoſes of his profeſſion. In vain will he preach, in vain will he ſet a good example, if a mean appearance and mode of living contradict the received opinions of congruity, and produce contempt. There are indeed rich preferments; but theſe, it is obſerved, do not uſually fall to merit as the reward of it, but are laviſhed where intereſt and family connection put in their irreſiſtible claim. They ſeem, in this age, to be conſidered as ſupplemental proviſions for the younger brothers of opulent and noble families. He, therefore, who has neither intereſt nor connections, muſt learn, when he enters on this profeſſion, to view the goods

goods of this world in the light in which they have been considered by the wiſeſt and the beſt of mortals.

More families have been raiſed to civil eminence by the ſtudy of the law, than by any other purſuit. Riches and honours have been profuſely accumulated on its ſucceſsful profeſſors. The multiplication of ſtatutes, and the variety of forms in modern times, have indeed rendered the ſtudy uncommonly intricate and laborious, and it ſeems therefore to merit uncommon rewards. But diſtinguiſhed ſucceſs is neceſſarily confined to few, and many have worn out a good conſtitution in peruſing books of all others the leaſt amuſing, without any return of honour or of profit. In this age the profeſſion is overrun by the multitude of nominal, if not real ſtudents. Formerly the heir to a good eſtate was brought up to little elſe than fox-hunting, and to be in at the death, and to water the *quorum* ten miles round, were the objects of his higheſt ambition; but now he is uſually entered at an inn of court, adviſed to read Blackſtone, and called to the bar. And though he ſhould never ſucceed there, yet it is certainly better to let a young man have a profeſſion to employ his thoughts, than to ſuffer him to live in idleneſs and vice. When, after a life of uſeful labour, the advocate is rewarded with a judge's appointment, his labour does not ceaſe. Eaſe, his proper recompence, remains ſtill at a diſtance. Perhaps, during the time of buſineſs, there are few employments more irkſome and unhealthy. The truly valuable rewards are indeed ſeldom obtained in the law, till age and application have weakened the powers of perception; and when theſe are decayed, what are external advantages? Upon the whole, we may conclude, that though the profeſſion of the law, when attended with ſucceſs, is lucrative and well adapted to raiſe and eſtabliſh a family, it is ſeldom conſiſtent with perſonal tranquillity.

The preparation for the practice of phyſic is by no means agreeable. A philoſopher may indeed attend a diſſection with pleaſure, as affording an opportunity for the obſervation of nature; but it muſt always be diſguſting to view the loathſome objects of an infirmary.

Yet

Yet this discipline is necessary; for books alone are of little use. After all the expence and labour of education, it is mortifying to the sensibility of merit to observe those chiefly encouraged, who have little else to recommend them than confidence and external grace of behaviour. He whose solid knowledge induces him to speak with diffidence on the success of a prescription, is thought by the generality less able than the bold pretender. With all his physiological knowledge, if he has not the address to conciliate the whims of fashion on his side, his sense of feeling will seldom be soothed by the grateful application of a fee. Men of sense may respect him, but he must be enriched by old women and fools. When, however, he is sufficiently employed, it must be an additional pleasure to the natural satisfaction of success, to find his own emolument arising from giving ease to the distressed. Yet it is by no means advisable, that any should be trained to this profession, who do not possess such a degree of independence, as may enable them to be easy under the neglect of a capricious world.

The army affords a fine asylum for those spirits which are too restless for domestic life. But though it has many charms for a warm imagination, it seems little adapted to give solid comfort at any time, much less in the season of infirmity and in old age. It is happy for the commonwealth, as things are now constituted, that the acknowledged gentility of the profession obliterates the sense of its hardships.

Still less suited to afford tranquil pleasure, the navy is yet always supplied even by those who have ease and affluence at home. To be confined with a crowd for many months in a wooden machine, is a situation which nothing but use and example could render tolerable. This lot, however, must fall to some; and it does not appear, that they to whom it is fallen, are less happy than the rest of mankind. Providence wisely fits the disposition to external circumstances.

The employment of merchandise is commonly esteemed less liberal than any of these; and it is true, that the preparation for it, and the arts of keeping and improving money, have a tendency to contract the sentiments.

timents. The profeſſions have ſome connection with public ſpirit, with ſcience and philanthropy. The trader's views ſeem to centre in private emolument; and, though he is highly beneficial to the community, it ſeems not from intention; on the contrary, he appears ever ready to take advantage of it without injury to his character, and conſequently to his intereſt. Yet it muſt be confeſſed, that, in our commercial country, and in the preſent age, the mercantile orders have frequently ſhewn themſelves truly honourable and enlightened; and he would act imprudently and ridiculouſly, who ſhould ſlight a good opportunity of introducing his ſon to a ſucceſsful merchandiſe, merely becauſe it has not been held ſo liberal as the profeſſion of him who ſtarves with a doctor's degree.

All the occupations of life are found to have their advantages and diſadvantages admirably adapted to preſerve the juſt equilibrium of happineſs. This we may confidently aſſert, that, whatever are the inconveniencies of any of them, they are all preferable to a life of inaction; to that wretched liſtleſsneſs, which is conſtrained to purſue pleaſure as a buſineſs, and by rendering it the object of ſevere and unvaried attention, deſtroys its very eſſence.

No. LIV. ON AFFECTATION OF THE CHARACTER OF SPORTSMEN.

ANIMALS that are hurtful to man, and are therefore deſtroyed by him, ſeem to have an inſtinctive knowledge of their enemy, and avoid his approach before they can have experienced his power or his contrivance. Man likewiſe poſſeſſes a counteracting inſtinct, which leads him to the receſſes of the foreſt, and bears him with alacrity through all the dangers and fatigues of a chace.

This inſtinct was neceſſary to his ſubſiſtence, as well as defence, in the ſavage ſtate; for the prey that he caught was his only food. Implanted in his conſtitution,

tution, it continues to operate with great force, even when he is advanced to a ſtate in which his wants are ſupplied by the inventions of civiliſed life.

In our country, where every improvement of life is carried to an exalted height, the inſtinct of the hunter is certainly not obliterated by the new propenſities ſuperinduced in a ſtate of civilization. There is ſcarcely an individual of thoſe who are not refined to a very uncommon degree, who delight not in the ſports of the field. The rich muſt not flatter themſelves with an idea that their taſte is peculiar to themſelves; for there is really no taſte more vulgar, and more prevalent among the loweſt orders, than the taſte for deſtroying noxious animals, protected by the legiſlature for the amuſement of the wealthy. The mechanic leaves, without remorſe, the employment which is to ſupport himſelf and his family, to follow the Eſquire in the chace of a fox, and would rather ſhoot a pheaſant or inſnare a trout, than earn a guinea. The glee with which he recounts the adventures of the purſuit, proves it to be a pleaſure congenial to his heart.

A wiſe politician, who did not wiſh to monopoliſe the delights of the chace, would encourage this natural propenſity among the vagabond and the unemployed. For beſides its utility in the deſtruction of vermin, it tends to infuſe a ſpirit, a hardineſs, and a ſubtilty, well ſuited to qualify ſuch perſons for the dangers and the hardſhips, the contrivances and the ſtratagems, of a naval and military life. A man who is excluded from more liberal employments by the lowneſs of his ſtation, may render himſelf a uſeful member of ſociety by catching moles and hares, rats and foxes.

But it is really no leſs ridiculous than lamentable, that the heir to an eſtate, the man of education, ſhould forego the honours and pleaſures of ſocial, civil, and literary exertions, merely to enjoy the delight of joining a pack of hounds in the deſtruction of a helpleſs animal. Yet the truth is, this inſtinct, as I venture to call it, operates with great violence among thoſe whoſe opportunities for improvement might enable them to ſubdue every leſs laudable relic of ſavage humanity.

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The nobles of our land, whoſe example might have a ſalutary influence in diſſeminating every uſeful quality, are ſometimes deſtitute of all ideas of excellence beyond the ſphere of a ſtable. They indeed indulge their propenſities of this kind without controul. The laws are on their ſide, and the poor man is prevented from deſtroying the vermin that fattens on his ſubſtance. The game-laws are, however, confeſſed by thoſe who enact them, to be a diſgrace to an enlightened age. At the ſame time that they infringe on liberty, they argue a very conſiderable degree of barbariſm.

The love of rural ſports, with all their appendages of horſes, dogs, and jockies, is at preſent carried ſo far, that the gentleman by birth labours to lower himſelf to the rank of a huntſman, and even dreſſes himſelf in the garb of an oſtler. It would not, in the preſent day, be ſurpriſing to meet a privy-counſellor or a judge in the exterior of a whipper-in.

And why ſhould they be cenſured? ſays the pretender to ſuperior reaſon. Is a man leſs honeſt or leſs learned, according to any difference in his dreſs? It is certain that, if the world were filled with philoſophers, it would be a circumſtance of little moment. But every thing that lowers the great in the eyes of the vulgar, injures ſociety by diſturbing the ſettled climax of ſubordination. The vulgar are awed into ſubmiſſion by no methods ſo effectually, as by a reſpectable outſide. Were a clergyman, for inſtance, to aſcend the pulpit in the dreſs of a jockey, ſuch a dreſs as ſome are ſeen to wear on the week-days, he might ſpeak with the tongue of an angel, and yet be diſregarded. His appearance, even on other occaſions, in the livery of a ſportſman, though it may make him paſs for a knowing one, and recommend him to his patron, will degrade him among his pariſhioners, and render his order contemptible.

The influence of dreſs on manners is conſiderable, though not much attended to by the moraliſt. Horace indeed relates, that when Eutrapelus wiſhed to do any one an injury, he gave him fine clothes. The cauſe of an effect thus produced in the diſpoſition by the external

ternal habit, is, that the mind inſenſibly adopts ſomething of the character it perſonates. There is a natural love of congruity, which inſenſibly cauſes the behaviour to correſpond with the dreſs. He who aſſumes all the externals of low life, will ſoon exhibit proofs of internal abaſement. If the peer condeſcends to ſpend his days in a ſtable, and to dreſs like his groom, he will ſoon differ from him in thoſe circumſtances alone which render his degeneracy more conſpicuous and deteſtable. It will not be thought calumny to aſſert, that our own times have exhibited ſome melancholy examples of this diſgraceful humiliation.

A taſte for the pleaſures of the race is indeed juſtified by the example of a moſt refined people. But the Greeks, it is imagined, did not adopt it as affording an opportunity for gaming. In our age and nation, it is warmly patroniſed by the illuſtrious and noble, not from liberal but mean views; and it is frequented by thoſe infernal wretches, whoſe profeſſion it is to take advantage of their ſuperiors folly. And theſe, by a ſtrange event, are admitted to familiarity with the great, whoſe wealth they pillage, and whoſe principles they corrupt. The ſtand, or gallery at a horſe-race, has been very juſtly likened to a Pandæmonium.

Rural ſports, alſo, when not purſued with an attention greater than their importance will admit, nor as the buſineſs of life, afford a healthy and a manly relaxation. But when all the circumſtances which relate to them are conſidered with a ſerioufneſs, and purſued with an ardour, which momentous buſineſs only can juſtify, the moraliſt cannot help lamenting that ſo much uſeful induſtry is miſplaced. When they lead the rich and liberal into company and occupations which degrade their dignity, he cannot but expreſs an indignant ſentiment. He ſees with regret, at a time when national virtue is particularly required, ſome of thoſe who have moſt influence in a nation, totally engaged with dogs, horſes, and grooms.

To value a noble animal for its uſe, to admire it for its beauty and ſwiftneſs, to love it for its generous alacrity in the ſervice of man, is natural and reaſonable.

It is indeed the mark of an amiable diſpoſition, to obſerve and to be pleaſed with the manners and actions of the poor animals whom nature has ſubjected to our command. If fidelity and generoſity are lovely qualities, the dog and the horſe have a peculiar claim to a ſhare of affection. But they who circumſcribe their ideas within the verge of a ſtable, who prefer the company of their irrational animals to the ſociety of a fellow-creature, ſeem to be in danger of gradually aſſimilating with the nature of their beaſts, and of acquiring a degree of brutal ferocity.

No. LV. ON THE VANITY AND FOLLY OF DEPARTING FROM OUR PROPER SPHERE TO BECOME AUTHORS AND ORATORS, WITHOUT PREVIOUS AND SUFFICIENT PREPARATION.

IT has been obſerved, that the writer who declaims againſt vanity, is probably, at the ſame time, under its influence. There are however ſome ſpecies of vanity, which, in compariſon with others, are not only excuſable, but almoſt laudable. The vanity of wiſhing to appear in print, when the perſon who entertains it has been well educated, and is free from the neceſſity of attention to any particular buſineſs for his ſupport, frequently operates as a ſtimulus to induſtry, and induſtry ſeldom fails of becoming, in ſome mode or other, beneficial. If he, who is really a ſtudent by profeſſion, feels an ambition to become an author, though he ſhould fail through the defect of his abilities, yet he cannot be ſaid to have acted out of character; neither does it often happen, that the time and attention, which he has given to his work, is ruinous to himſelf or family: for ſtudy is his employment, and he has been labouring in his vocation. He has innocently amuſed, and perhaps improved himſelf, though

though unable to communicate with ſucceſs theſe advantages to others. His vanity may be pardoned, though the fruits of it cannot be praiſed.

But it is common in this age to find traders, and even manufacturers of a very ſubordinate rank, ſo faſcinated with the brilliancy of literary fame, or ſo over-run with what has been called the itch of ſcribbling, that they devote that time and thought to tagging wretched rhymes, or penning paltry proſe, which ought to be ſpent in providing food and cloathing for themſelves and their families.

The unfortunate man, who has once contracted this lamentable diſtemper, immediately feels an averſion for his trade or manual employment. He conſiders himſelf as a great natural genius, who has been brought up by his injudicious parents to a buſineſs far beneath him, and for which he is totally unfit. He is too delicate for hard or diſagreeable labour, and too volatile for the phlegmatic employment of a counter or a counting-houſe. But it is a certain truth, that we ſeldom ſucceed in the mode of life which we do not love; and diſtreſs of every kind is the certain conſequence of this miſplaced induſtry.

I wiſh the literary trader or mechanic to conſider, how very much out of character a ſtudent by profeſſion would appear, were he to invade the province of the workſhop, and to lay down the pen and the book for the chiſel or the hammer, or the laſt, or the needle, or the trowel. He would ſucceed but ill in his ſtudies, if he choſe to ſpend his time at the counter and in the warehouſe, inſtead of the library; and the trader and mechanic may aſſure themſelves, that, notwithſtanding the flattering ſuggeſtions of their own vanity, they uſually appear no leſs abſurd, and ſucceed no leſs unhappily, in writing verſes, than the ſtudent would in making a ſhoe, or retailing cheeſe and haberdaſhery.

This unhappy rage for waſting paper is not only attended with the loſs of fame, but of money. The materials neceſſary for printing, and the modes of announcing the important production to the public, are unavoidably attended with conſiderable expence; and, alas! the ſale is uſually ſo inconſiderable as ſcarcely to

pay for the wear of pens, and the confumption of ink. But it is really lamentable to ſee that money unneceſſarily expended on paper and print, which ought to go to butchers, bakers, brewers and chandlers. I cannot help thinking it a benevolent action, when the periodical publications treat productions, which originate from ſuch authors, with ſarcaſm and ridicule. Though the laſh of criticiſm may make the ſimple culprit ſmart for a little while, it may have a moſt beneficial effect on him, in ſaving him and his family from ſtarving. A mercantile or mechanical author ſwelled with fancied importance, and neglecting his buſineſs in purſuit of literary fame, would furniſh no bad topic for theatrical ridicule. Indeed, any effectual method of exploding a folly, which is ſo pregnant with miſery in private life, is greatly deſirable; and no treatment can be ſo effectual in ſuppreſſing what originates in vanity, as that which mortifies it moſt, contempt and ridicule.

But this literary madneſs of the trading and mechanical orders diſplays itſelf in various ſymptoms. If it produces many writers, I believe, it produces more orators. They who cannot write, or at leaſt cannot ſpell, are more inclined to let their genius evaporate by the volubility of the tongue than of the pen; by which method their defects in the ſcience of orthography are concealed in elegance and pathos of elocution. The ſubjects are invariably politics and religion. If they can read, they derive political arguments from newſpaper eſſays, and religious from Bolingbroke, Tindal, and the reſt of that low and contemptible ſet of writers. If they cannot read, they ſucceed better ſtill; for then the arguments muſt neceſſarily proceed from immediate inſpiration. The ſcene in which theſe rivals of Cicero and Demoſthenes chiefly ſhine, when they defend religion, is in the fields near Bedlam; and when they fight againſt church and ſtate it is in thoſe ſchools of oratory, which lately enabled London to vie with Athens.

Now, I wiſh I could prevail on thoſe redoubtable rhetoricians to be hearers as well as ſpeakers, and to liſten to a very powerful and pathetic ſpecies of oratory, the cries and diſtreſs of a family at home, reduced to a ſtate of ſtarving, while the orator, inſtead of mending

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ſoals and heel-pieces, or vending ſmall wares, is diſgorging nonſenſe on an audience of fools, who muſt be even more fooliſh than himſelf, if they are able to liſten to him with patience.

To all writers and orators, who might be much more uſefully and honourably employed at the anvil or the loom, in the ſhop or the counting-houſe, I will recommend the conſideration of how many requiſites are neceſſary to form a diſtinguiſhed writer and a good orator. No man can communicate what is valuable to others, unleſs he has himſelf previouſly accumulated a plentiful ſtore. A liberal education, and much reading and reflection, ſuperadded to a competent ſhare of natural ability, can alone enable a writer to produce what may deſerve the attention of a poliſhed age. More leiſure than can fall to the lot of thoſe who live by mercantile or manual induſtry, is neceſſary to attain an eminence in literature. And with reſpect to the oratory which ſome of the lower orders are ſo fond of affecting, it is uſually a habit of vain and noiſy babbling, little diſſimilar to the ravings of madneſs, and not unfrequently leading to it. I have myſelf ſeen the dreadful effects of methodiſtical enthuſiaſm. Many an honeſt taylor or ſhoemaker has turned preacher, and hurried himſelf, and many of his hearers, into abſolute lunacy. And even that kind of ſpeechifying, which ſome perſons in the mercantile walks of life are ſo fond of diſplaying in clubs, committees, and aſſociations, often tends to no other purpoſe but to waſte time, and fill the ſpeaker with a ſelf-conceit, which ſometimes terminates in his ruin, by giving his ambition a wrong direction. I am well aſſured, that a miſplaced attention to letters, and a fooliſh vanity in ſcribbling in newſpapers and periodical repoſitories, has contributed greatly to increaſe the number of advertiſements in the London Gazette.

Nothing can be more laudable than that merchants, traders, and mechanics, ſhould fill up their intervals of leiſure in reading books adapted to their various taſtes, abilities, and previous improvements. But they muſt be cautious, leſt the charms of literary purſuits operate upon them in ſuch a manner as to bring on

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that fatal diſtemper, the ſcribbling itch, or the rage of oratory. The manuſcripts which they ſhould delight in compoſing ſhould be day-books, ledgers, bills, and letters to correſpondents, and their rhetoric ſhould chiefly be diſplayed behind the counter. The more of theſe the better; but when figures give place to rhymes, and poſting to proſing, beware of a commiſſion of bankrupt.

The evil which I endeavour to remove is really a ſerious one. The poor ſcribbler or prater may be a very good man; but his weakneſs, in this reſpect, will probably involve him in miſeries which weakneſs alone cannot deſerve. His ill ſucceſs as an author, followed as it will be with ſlights, ridicule, and cenſure, muſt be to him a perpetual ſource of vexation. Thus his favourite purſuit terminates in diſappointment, and his neceſſary purſuit, his trade or employment, on which he depends for bread, fails to ſupply him, becauſe it is neglected.

It is one of the beſt ornaments, as well as the ſureſt means of ſucceſs and happineſs, in all the branches of the mercantile life, to be ſteady in an attention to what is called the main chance. Letters may form the amuſement of the trader, not his buſineſs. But letters will ſoon be the buſineſs of his life, if he devotes himſelf to compoſition, and learns to pant for literary fame. Letters, purſued within proper limits, will give his mind an elegance, and prevent it from being contracted by a conſtant attention to lucre; but cultivated with the ardour and conſtancy of a profeſſed ſtudent, they ſeldom fail of bringing on a complication of diſtreſs, to which their ſatisfactions cannot be a counterpoiſe. It would not be a bad rule, if merchants and manufacturers, who feel an inclination to poetry, and other literary labours, were always to make a point of providing for their wives and daughters, before they think of devoting themſelves to thoſe fantaſtic and extravagant miſtreſſes, Thalia, Melpomene, and their ſeven ſiſters.

No. LVI. HINTS TO THOSE WHO ARE DESIGNED FOR A MERCANTILE LIFE.

IT is no wonder that many fail in their employments and profeſſions, when it is conſidered by what ſlender and childiſh motives they are often fixed in the purſuit, which is to continue for life. One boy admires a red coat and a cockade, or a pair of trowſers and a jacket, and therefore he will be a ſoldier or a ſailor. Another thinks it cannot but be a perpetual ſource of happineſs to live amidſt a profuſion of plums and ſugar, and therefore he will be a grocer. An early and accidental aſſociation of ideas is formed, by which happineſs is united with ſome peculiar mode of life, and a choice is made before reaſon or experience can poſſibly have ſuggeſted a cauſe for judicious preference.

The choice of boys at an early age is certainly too ill founded to direct their parents in fixing their future mode of life. What ſucceſs can be expected in a plan of conduct which originates in the whim of an infant? A parent therefore muſt ſtudy the diſpoſition of his child, and endeavour to conform it to that profeſſion or trade, to which he has the beſt opportunity of introducing him with advantage. The young mind may be moulded like wax, with a due degree of ſkill, to almoſt any figure.

In an inſular country like ours, where a great part of the commodities conſumed by the people are imported, trade muſt of neceſſity conſtitute the employment of the majority. I conſider it therefore of very great conſequence, that particular inſtructions ſhould be adapted to young perſons, whoſe lives are to be ſpent in the engagements of commerce. They are uſually fixed at the deſk and the counter, at ſo early an age as almoſt to exclude all inſtruction, but that which relates to the confined views of one particular occupation. Were I to offer advice to a young man intended for the commercial

mercial walk, I would addreſs him in a manner ſomewhat ſimilar to the following. It is impoſſible that what I ſay ſhould be exactly accommodated to all circumſtances and ſituations; but yet it may ſuggeſt to all ſuch hints as are capable of improvement and particular application.

" The wiſdom of our anceſtors has preſcribed, that " ſeven years ſhall be ſpent in learning the exerciſe of " a trade or a mechanical art. This, like many other " of their inſtitutions, which the vanity of the preſent " age is apt to deſpiſe, is founded on ſubſtantial rea- " ſons. Suppoſing you to begin at fourteen, ſeven " years bring you to the age of twenty-one; a period, " at which it is quite early enough to aſſume the liberty " of manhood. Nor indeed can thoſe habits be formed " with certainty, which are to continue during life, in " a ſhorter ſpace.

" Seven years, however, it muſt be confeſſed, are " a very conſiderable portion of life at any age, and " particularly valuable in the vernal ſeaſon, when the " ſeeds of every amiable and uſeful quality are to be " ſown and cultivated. You will therefore be parti- " cularly careful to employ it in a conſtant application " to uſeful purſuits.

" The knowledge of your particular buſineſs will " claim, after your moral and religious duties, your " firſt and longeſt attention. Be not afraid of incur- " ring among your companions the appellation of a " dull cit or a ſpiritleſs plodder. Such names are uſu- " ally the poor conſolations of thoſe, who envy the " happineſs which muſt attend the propriety of your " conduct. Proceed therefore in the regular perform- " ance of your duties, animated by the approbation of " your own heart, and of your friends and ſuperin- " tendants, and deſpiſing that ridicule which origi- " nates only in malice, though it has been ſufficiently " powerful to ruin many. I need not inform you, " that writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, and all the " particular myſteries, as they are called, of your par- " ticular occupation, will leave you little time for in- " action. The leſs, indeed, the better. Vice and " miſery are almoſt the certain conſequences of your

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" not knowing how to employ your time, Great ci-
" ties, where commerce is chiefly carried on, abound
" with temptations, and few are found more frequently
" in the haunts of debauchery and diſſipation than clerks
" and apprentices.

" Since however it is impoſſible but that you ſhould
" have ſome leiſure, I very ſeriouſly recommend it to
" you to acquire a taſte for good books; I ſay good
" books, for you may injure your mind, and ruin
" your fortune, by an indiſcriminate and improper
" choice. The readers in your way of life ſeldom
" read any thing but novels, plays, and licentious
" productions of every ſpecies. Beſides that theſe have
" a tendency to corrupt the morals of young men in ge-
" neral, they have uſually an influence peculiarly hurt-
" ful on the mind of the young trader; for they almoſt
" invariably repreſent the eſſential virtues of a trader,
" ſuch as honeſty, ſobriety, punctuality, and induſtry,
" as contemptible and ridiculous. The very name and
" character of a trader appear in them in a low and
" vulgar light. The object held out as a model for
" imitation is uſually ſome diſſipated rake, who, with
" every vice and unfortunate failing which tends to
" make himſelf miſerable, and to break a parent's
" heart, is repreſented as a fine fellow, and as the ob-
" ject of love and admiration.

" Let me intreat you to ſummon reſolution enough
" to avoid ſuch reading till your judgment is mature,
" your paſſions regulated, and your principles formed:
" If you have been fortunate enough to have acquired
" a little knowledge of the claſſics at your ſchool,
" preſerve and improve it. Read and reflect upon the
" hiſtories of Greece, Rome, and your own country.
" There are books of morality in the Engliſh language
" as full of entertainment for a mind unvitiated as any
" novel.

" A taſte for good books will have a happy influence
" on your temper, and will tend to ſecure your con-
" duct, not only by filling up your time innocently,
" but by ſuggeſting to your mind wiſe rules and uſeful
" maxims. They will teach you to know yourſelf
" and your ſituation, and to ſet a juſt value on thoſe

" things which ignorant avarice and ambition purſue " with reſtleſs avidity, and at the ſame time without " any genuine enjoyment. They will enlarge your " views, and give you a liberality of ſentiment and " manners. If you attend ſolely to the means of get- " ting money, your mind will gradually become nar- " row. You will conſider money as the only good. " Your eyes and your heart will be ſhut to all thoſe " other objects of delight, with which the God of " nature has profuſely furniſhed the reſidence of his " favourite creature. This is an enlightened age; and " the man of fortune, but illiberal mind, muſt be pi- " tied, deſpiſed, and neglected. He will find few " aſſociates, but among thoſe who are as vulgar as " himſelf, and whoſe riches, if they poſſeſs riches, " cannot render them reſpectable. But moderation is " neceſſary in that which is laudable, and while I re- " commend to you an attention to letters, I muſt re- " mind you, that they are only to form your recre- " ation, and not your buſineſs. Be contented with " reading. Beware of ſcribbling verſes when you ought " to be poſting your accounts. A little applauſe " beſtowed on your rhymes may be your ruin. It may " give your ambition a wrong object, and lead you " aſtray, like the dancing vapour of a miſty evening. " Be cautious of raiſing your ideas above your ſituation. " Dare to be what you really are; and, if you think " your ſituation and character require to be elevated " and adorned, elevate and adorn them yourſelf by ex- " emplary behaviour. If you wiſh to become reſpect- " able, you will ſucceed by raiſing the ſphere in which " you are placed, but not by ſhewing, that you think " it too humble for a perſon of your exalted ideas.

" You muſt beware of entertaining too early the " fatal affectation of ſhining as a fine gentleman and a " man of pleaſure. To ſupport theſe characters, ſup- " poſing them conſiſtent with innocence, a fund of " money is abſolutely neceſſary. It can be procured " only by importuning and offending a parent, by " incurring debt, or by fraudulent practices; each of " which methods is almoſt a certain ſource of ruin and " infamy. Add to this, that he who is always adorn-

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" ing his perſon, and frequenting theatres, aſſemblies, " and public gardens, will be ſo over-run with folly " and vanity, that no room will be left for the ſolid " virtues of the ſober citizen. Before the expiration " of his apprenticeſhip, he will probably grow ſick of " his trade, get an enſigncy, if his father can afford " to purchaſe one, and, if not, turn ſtrolling player, " and at laſt, inſtead of becoming an alderman, or a " reſpectable private citizen, degenerate to an infamous " ſwindler.

" I conſider the manner in which a Sunday is ſpent, " in a great city, by the young men who are trained " to trade and merchandize, as a matter of the higheſt " conſequence to their happineſs. The maſter and " miſtreſs of the family are then uſually at their " country-houſe, or engaged in ſome rural excurſion. " There is no reſtraint and no amuſement at home. " The apprentice or clerk is glad to make uſe of " his liberty, and to fly from the ſolitude of a deſerted " houſe. Parties of pleaſure are formed; improper " and even vicious connections made; and the poor " young man often dates his greateſt misfortunes from " that day, the inſtitution of which was deſigned to " increaſe the virtue and happineſs of mankind. Part " of the day may be very reaſonably and uſefully de- " voted to innocent relaxation; but let that part con- " ſiſt of the intervals between divine ſervice, or of that " which remains at its concluſion. Sunday affords a " fine opportunity for indulging an inclination for read- " ing; and I have no doubt, but that, after a few hours " ſpent in this decent and profitable manner, there " would be more pleaſure than in galloping along the " city-road, and driving a high phaeton to Richmond " or to Windſor.

" I have been thus particular in ſuggeſting advice to " you for the conduct of an apprenticeſhip, becauſe " good conduct during that dangerous period is a very " promiſing preſage of future ſucceſs. I make uſe of " the word Apprenticeſhip, though I know that many " are introduced to the ſuperior houſes of merchandize " without the form of indentures, and without a li- " mited term of preparation. But whatever time is

" ſpent

" ſpent in preparation, and whether it is ſpent at the " counter or at the deſk, the hints which I have " thrown out may, I hope, be ſometimes ſerviceable. " If they ſave but one out of a thouſand from ruin, I " ſhall be amply repaid.

" I will add but one more rule, and that ſhall be a " general one. Learn to place a due value on the " plain and homely qualities of common honeſty, " punctuality, diligence, and œconomy. Were theſe " purſued with half the ardour with which the graces " are courted, and the vices adopted, there would be " fewer bankrupts than there are, notwithſtanding the " American war. Bad times are indeed injurious to " commerce, and ſo alſo are bad manners in the con- " ductors of it. When both are combined in a remark- " able degree, it is not to be wondered, that there are " complainings in our ſtreets.

" With a mind enlightened and enlarged by proper " education, and a heart furniſhed with ſound principles, " if you have fair opportunities, you will not often fail. " You will probably riſe to that honourable character, " a Britiſh merchant, who has acquired opulence with " unſhaken integrity, and who is able to enjoy and " adorn it with a noble liberality."

No. LVII. ON THE SELFISHNESS OF MEN OF THE WORLD.

THE profeſſed ſtudents of the art of pleaſing, uſually poſſeſs ſome qualities, which, when ſeen in their true light, and without the varniſh of deceit, are peculiarly unpleaſing. Indeed, the very motive which urges them to ſtudy this celebrated art, is in itſelf moſt odious, as it conſiſts of a deſire to ſerve themſelves alone, at the expence of every virtue connected with ſincerity, and by making thoſe the dupes of their artifice, whoſe honeſty has rendered them as unſuſpecting as they are amiable.

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We all love ourſelves, indeed, ſufficiently well; but he who labours indiſcriminately to pleaſe every one with whom he converſes, however paradoxical the aſſertion may appear, is uſually of all men the moſt ſelfiſh. A ſincerely good and benevolent man will ſtudy to ſerve and to pleaſe men, in proportion as they may deſerve his attention, and as they may be pleaſed and ſerved conſiſtently with truth and honeſty. He will be the friend of individuals; but always more a friend to truth than to any particular man. He will ſtudy to pleaſe, where he can do it without deceit, and without meanly ſacrificing the liberty of a man, and accommodating his own opinions to the opinions of any company to which chance may introduce him. But the mere man of this world has learned to conſider truth and ſincerity as words only; ſuch indeed as may, on ſome occaſions, facilitate the practice of his art, but muſt never injure, what is ſuperior in his idea to all conſiderations, his own intereſt.

This ſort of perſons is ſkilled to aſſume the appearance of all virtues and all good qualities; but their favourite maſk is univerſal benevolence. And the reaſon why they prefer this diſguiſe to all others is, that it tends moſt effectually to conceal its oppoſite, which is indeed their true character, an univerſal ſelfiſhneſs.

It is a maxim with them, that as there is no individual who may not, in the viciſſitudes of human affairs, have an opportunity of ſerving or injuring them, there is none whoſe favour they ought not to court. They are therefore univerſally affable and obliging. So condeſcending are they, that one would almoſt imagine, that they are totally exempt from pride; but after they have treated you with the moſt inſinuating familiarity, ſhould you happen to meet them in the company of your ſuperiors, it is probable they will not know you, and, if you venture to accoſt them, will beg the favour of your name. When they have any favour to aſk of you, or are accidentally in your company where you happen to be the principal perſon, they admire, flatter, and ſhew you all poſſible attention; but meet them ſoon afterwards at a public place

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of reſort, arm in arm with a lord, and they will paſs cloſe by you, and never ſee you. They either look ſtrait forwards, or they are engaged in laughing at my lord's jeſt, or they really forget you. Whatever is the cauſe, their hats remain on their heads, and you endeavour to catch their eye in vain. You then begin to ſee, that theſe prodigiouſly agreeable, affable, clever, obliging gentlemen, are no more than mean, unprincipled, ſelfiſh, and ſycophantic deceivers.

If you were to judge of them by their dreſs, appearance, equipage, and converſation, you would imagine theſe agreeable men to be generous as well as agreeable. But, in truth, their generoſity extends only to themſelves, and their expences conſiſt chiefly in providing matters of external oſtentation. Theſe they find conducive to the great end in view, the attracting notice, and making advantageous connections. After all their boaſts, they are uſually hard and extortionate in their bargains with the honeſt tradeſmen who ſupply neceſſaries; they ſeldom heſitate at any mode of getting or ſaving money while it can be kept clandeſtine; and, though they are profuſe at a watering place, they are often contemptibly penurious among their poor neighbours, and at their own tables. They play at cards, at which they are great adepts, and therefore prodigiouſly clever and agreeable men; but though they declare the contrary, they play for gain rather than diverſion. With all their vanity, love of ſhow, love of pleaſure, and love of diſſipation, they are alſo moſt powerfully actuated by the love of money.

Self-regard, indeed, is evidently the principle of all their conduct. They appear in their own eyes of vaſt magnitude, and conſider the reſt of mankind as inſtruments, which they may manage, with a little cunning, ſo as to render them ſubſervient to their own pleaſure or to profit. They do indeed too often ſucceed, and raiſe themſelves to fortunes and reputation by deluding the ſimple and inconſiderate. They are therefore often admired as truly wiſe, and not unfrequently pointed out as models for imitation.

But I cannot help thinking, that however they are admired, and whatever ſucceſs they may obtain, they

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are both despicable and unhappy. By servilely cringing to all, and especially to the great, without attending to personal deserts and characters, they render themselves, in effect, absolute slaves, and their minds soon contract all the meanness of slavery. Such meanness is certainly contemptible, nor can I conceive that such slavery, with any fortune or connections whatever, can by any means be capable of manly enjoyment. Liberty, independence, and a consciousness of having acted uprightly, will render a state of indigence sweet; and the want of them must embitter the envied blessings of rank and opulence. Providence has, indeed, so ordered it, for the sake of promoting the important ends of society, that they, who live to self-interest and self-love, exclusively of all social regards, should be disappointed in their purposes. Immoderate selfishness, like all other greedy dispositions, sacrifices the present for that future enjoyment which never arrives to mortal man. But the selfishness of the mere man of the world has this aggravation, that it leads to the neglect of some of the most amiable virtues, and to the commission of crimes of the blackest dye. So that the character I have delineated is incompatible with a good conscience; and without a good conscience, what a phantom is all human bliss! After all the triumphs of worldly wisdom, and the contempt in which simplicity is held, I am convinced, that it is far better to be the deceived than the deceivers.

At the same time it is certainly right to warn young men of the deceits of the world, and teach them not rashly to believe, that those characters are most excellent which appear most plausible. I would briefly advise them, whenever they see a man remarkably studious of external appearances, devoted to the graces of dress and address, pretending great friendship and regard for persons whom he never saw before, promising liberally, perpetually smiling, and *always agreeable*—to beware of counterfeits, for such are abroad.

No. LVIII. ON THE FOLLY OF DENYING THAT HOMER HAS FAULTS, SINCE HIS BEAUTIES ARE SUCH AS PREVENT HIS FAULTS FROM BECOMING DISGUSTFUL.

CRITICISM has been often employed in illuſtrating the beauties of authors who need not the illuſtration. The excellent productions of genius are immediately felt by all who poſſeſs ſenſibility. To thoſe who do not, it is to little purpoſe that *elucidations* are addreſſed. Writers who copy from Nature, will find admirers among thoſe to whom Nature has given the noble privilege of feeling all that is capable of affecting humanity, and will readily forego the attention of readers, who muſt be taught by the inſtruction of art, to underſtand thoſe excellencies which were formed to be felt and taſted.

In reading Homer, every ſenſible mind feels itſelf animated with a warmth approaching to enthuſiaſm. A vivacity of expreſſion, a ſonorous language, an undeſcribable fire, the very eſſence of genius, rouſe and gratify all the nobler affections of the human breaſt. At the ſame time, a ſweet ſimplicity calls forth the milder emotions of love and eſteem, while the more elevated paſſages produce the juſt effect of real ſublimity.

Such is the ſympathetic glow, which the reader acquires in the peruſal of Homer, that he forgets thoſe defects which are diſcoverable, by a very ſmall ſhare of critical ſagacity. The conſtant recurrence of the ſame epithets, and the repetition of the ſame lines, however they may be palliated by the undiſtinguiſhing partiality of editors and tranſlators, are certainly faults. They proceeded from a careleſſneſs, perhaps an indolence, which indeed is eaſily pardoned in genius; but at the ſame time it muſt be remembered, that what admits of pardon muſt be blameable.

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The illuſtrators of this mighty genius have incurred juſt ridicule, in pointing out beauties never intended, and in refining even blemiſhes into becoming graces. It is a truth confirmed by daily experience, that an object, which has once fixed the affections, blinds the judgment. Thus it happens in common life, thus too in the arts. Horace was a man of a truly elegant taſte, and no blind admirer. He has ventured to pronounce, that Homer ſometimes nods: a truth, which his bigotted readers are very unwilling to allow. Homer's moſt verbal repetitions, and his coarſeſt language, are repreſented as the effect of that ſimplicity, which, when it is genuine, is allowed to be his characteriſtical excellence. But they are ſurely inadequate judges of the merit of compoſitions, who know not to diſcriminate between rudeneſs and ſimplicity.

From the reluctance which the admirers of Homer have always ſhewn to confeſs the obvious fault of his productions, it might perhaps have been concluded, that his beauties were too few to admit the avowal of a partial deformity. Yet the truth is, that, with all his imperfections on his head, he deſerves that admiration which has been laviſhly paid to him by the general voice of mankind. His ſpots, like thoſe of the ſun, to uſe a common ſimilitude, are loſt in ſurrounding light.

Every part of the Iliad glows with life, and none but ſuch as are totally devoid of that genius with which it abounds, can pauſe long enough to be diſguſted with minuter defects occaſioned by an attention to beauties. Zoilus deſerved his fate. He attended only to the defects of Homer; but his fate has frightened ſucceeding critics, and induced them to deny the exiſtence of defects in the poet whom they admired.

I repeat, that criticiſm is ſeldom ſo idly employed as when it illuſtrates the productions of ſelf-evident genius. Such genius carries its own radiant light with it. It makes itſelf felt by its own native force, and bears all before it by an irreſiſtible momentum.

The experience of ages has proved, that the excellencies of Homer poſſeſs power over the human heart, which might almoſt be called magical. His works have

have been wandering up and down the world during a longer period than those of any profane writer of equal authenticity. Yet there are no books which have come down to us with so little injury from the hand of time. Very few interpolations, and scarcely any chasms, are to be found in him. The cause of his superiority in this respect is indisputably, that he was always the object of general attention, that his verses were not only in the libraries, but in the hands, in the memories, and in the mouths of all who possessed a taste for poetry, and enjoyed opportunities for its cultivation.

In what consists this irresistible charm, this all-powerful influence? It is unquestionably a combination of all the fine qualities which genius can infuse; and among these, if I may venture to advance the opinion, the diction is the chief. The sound is every where an echo to the sense, the pauses are varied with the nicest judgment, both for the purpose of impressing the idea more forcibly, and of touching the ear with that melody, which, when duly produced, is capable of exciting in the mind the liveliest emotions. Milton has left all modern writers far behind him in the judicious variation of his pause. Homer excels him and all others. To this unrivalled excellence of a judicious disposition of the pauses, Homer adds such an artful inversion of words, as immediately directs the attention, and fixes the accent on the most important or significant expression in the metrical period. He enjoyed the advantage of a magnificent language, still further improved by commixture of the Ionic and all the other dialects. With such materials, and such skill, no wonder he has produced a work, which all, who can read it with facility, read with pleasure.

The beauties of language arise from two sources; the selection of words and their collocation. Many writers have excelled in one of these beauties, and have been totally deficient in the other. Homer has most happily united them, and produced that powerful effect, which must ever result from their judicious combination.

To enlarge on the excellencies of Homer, after the repeated illustrations and remarks of the most ingenious critics,

critics, ſeems ſuperfluous. He has been the idol of kingdoms, the favourite of princes, and all antiquity has been unanimous in his praiſe. The moderns have, for the moſt part, fully entered into the feelings of the ancients, have acknowledged the juſtneſs of all their eulogia of Homer, and have added to the general acclamation. But though this is true, yet it is no leſs certain, that in theſe times, and in ſome countries on the continent, an attention to Homer has been diſcouraged by thoſe to whom faſhion has given influence. His manners, his ſentiments, his language, have been ſtigmatiſed, by the admirers of French refinement, as coarſe and vulgar. Cheſterfield has called his language porter-like. The veneration in which he has ever been held is inſolently attributed to that prejudice, by which ſuperficial pretenders are diſpoſed to account for all the beſt and moſt amiable notions which the world has long adopted in morals, in religion, and in literature.

It muſt not be deemed a judgment too ſevere, when we venture to ſuggeſt, that the modern Zoili often condemn that which they do not underſtand. It is probable, that many of them have never read Homer but in their own languages. It is certain, that ſome of the ſevereſt of them have read him only in thoſe literal Latin interpretations, which are uſually ſubjoined in the common editions. From ſuch poor repreſentations, they can ſcarcely have a juſter idea of the great Mæonian, than of the immenſe ocean from the view of a canal.

It is not to be doubted but that many, who are diſqualified from judging, both by the deficiency of their education and their idleneſs, frequently labour to bring into diſrepute thoſe ſtudies, with the nature of which they are totally unacquainted. By dint of effrontery and artifice, they often ſucceed. But liberal ſcholars muſt wiſh, without any view to intereſt, that their attainments may be juſtly appreciated by their contemporaries, and will therefore exert themſelves to counteract the diſingenuous attempts of thoſe, who endeavour to lower them and their purſuits in the eyes of mankind.

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tain, that, if Thuanus does not equal, he approaches, in the excellencies of ſtyle, in dignity, and in copiouſneſs, the beſt models of antiquity.

One circumſtance has contributed to diminiſh the graces of his ſtyle, which he could not well avoid. Modern names of places and of perſons muſt abound in a work of this kind. But modern names have in general a barbarous ſound in a work written in Latin. They are, in truth, ſcarcely tolerable. Thuanus was ſenſible of it, and has therefore latinized them. Yet they ſtill retain ſomething of their uncouth ſound, and what is worſe, have ſo far affected the perſpicuity of the work, as to have rendered it totally unintelligible to the greater part of its readers, without a perpetual gloſſary. Thuanus did right in latinizing the names, but he has taken too great liberties. He has totally diſguiſed them. Who but an Oedipus could diſcern that Quadrigarius was the Latin name of Chartier, or Interamnas of Entragues? Deſmarets is tranſlated Paludanus; Dubois, Sylvius; le Sieur de Selves, Foreſtus. Dargonne aſſerts, that our hiſtorian has tranſlated the proper name Joly by the Latin Lepidus; but the editors obſerve that it is without foundation. The editors of the laſt fine edition have taken care to ſubjoin in the margin the modern names of perſons and places with great fidelity; but ſtill it is unpleaſant to be often interrupted in the warmth of attention by recurring to a gloſſary.

All laudable predilections have been carried too far. Thus the preference for the ancients, which is undoubtedly well founded, has led many modern writers, eſpecially thoſe who flouriſhed at the revival of learning, to change their Gothic names into words which had ſome reſemblance to Roman appellations; but which, at the ſame time, were neither Roman nor Gothic, and ſerved only to diſguiſe the owners under ſome barbarous combination of ſyllables with Latin terminations. In ſhort, the Gothiciſm of modern names is a great misfortune in the republic of letters; it conſtitutes a baſe alloy, which corrupts and ſullies the intrinſic beauties of an elegant Latin ſtyle. Nevertheleſs,

leſs, I would adviſe all future writers to give the name of a place or perſon varied only in its termination, if varied at all; for the want of perſpicuity is a defect, which no elegance can compenſate.

No. LX. ON OWEN, THE LATIN EPIGRAMMATIST.

HOWEVER abſurd the taſte of the age, writers of true genius will ſometimes find means to render themſelves conformable to it, and at the ſame time to claim the attention of a more enlightened period. Great ingenuity, though injudiciouſly and trivially employed, will ever excite the curioſity of readers, who love to obſerve the operation of the human faculties under the influence of the various modes of judging and writing, which, at different periods, have prevailed in the world of letters.

In the age in which Joannes Audoenus, or John Owen, was born, the lower kinds of wit were univerſally reliſhed. Puns, conceits, and a wretched ſpecies of epigrams, had totally ſuperſeded that unaffected mode of expreſſion which nature dictates, and which cannot fail to pleaſe when nature is allowed to form a judgment. Though the taſte for epigrams was univerſal, unfortunately the general choice did not fall on Martial. Claſſical expreſſion was little ſtudied. Any words which conveyed the idea with tolerable preciſion, and which, in point of quantity, were admiſſible into an hexameter or pentameter verſe, were ſure of reception. It muſt indeed be owned, that a very ſcrupulous attention was not always paid even to the quantity. Upon the whole, it is certain, that he who has formed himſelf upon claſſical models will often be diſguſted with the expreſſions of Owen and his coeval writers, at the ſame time that he is ſurpriſed and pleaſed by the wit and jocularity of their ſentiments. He will find many thoughts, which, in the management of a Martial, would have conſtituted epigrams of uncommon

mon excellence, but which, like a fine portrait in modern drapery, has loſt all freedom and grace by the Gothiciſm of their diction.

The epigrams of Owen are ſo numerous as nearly to amount to two thouſand. In ſuch a number, it is to be concluded from experience, that ſome will be good, others moderate, and the greater part of little or no merit. The great critic Rapin has ſaid, that it is ſufficient to have written one good epigram in the courſe of a life. His idea of a good epigram was perhaps too exalted. Owen has written many epigrams, which pleaſe and ſatisfy the moſt judicious reader, and which therefore muſt be allowed to deſerve the appellation of good. There is a great abundance of ingenious thoughts in every part of his little volume, and there is an eaſe of verſification acquired and confirmed by long habit, which, in ſome degree, conceals the defect of unclaſſical language. There are alſo a few epigrams, which are not defective in the beauties of ſtyle.

The epigrams of Owen were much read in his own and the ſucceeding age, and have, in the preſent times, afforded amuſement to the ſcholar, though they have not met with general attention. The neglect with which they have been received, is to be attributed to the contempt thrown on epigrammatic wit by writers of diſtinguiſhed taſte, who, while they juſtly attempted to explode a falſe kind of witticiſm, conſiſting of puns and miſerable conceits, involved this ſpecies of compoſition, which at that time had indeed greatly degenerated from its original grace, in a general and undeſerved cenſure.

Inſcriptions, for ſuch are epigrams according to the original meaning, are by no means, in their own nature, a contemptible ſpecies of compoſition. Prefixed to ſtatues, public buildings, ſepulchral monuments or books, and applied to great characters and on great occaſions, they often reflect honour, not only on their compoſers, but on nations and on princes. They are capable of the moſt elevated ſublimity, as well as the moſt poliſhed elegance of refined wit. From their conciſeneſs and brevity they are eaſily comprehended

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and retained; and there are few ſcholars, who have not committed to memory ſome favourite epigrams, which have ſtruck them with their pointed wit and beauty. Yet, at the ſame time, I have obſerved, that it is not agreeable to read a great collection of epigrams with an unſuſpended attention. The neceſſary want of connection, and the continual efforts of wit, ſoon fatigue the mind, which, though, like the palate, it may occaſionally delight in dainties, requires that its conſtant food ſhould be plain and natural.

For the want of decency in ſome of Owen's compoſitions, little apology can be offered. The taſte of thoſe readers muſt be groſs indeed, to whom indelicacy is humour, and obſcenity wit. It muſt however be conſidered, that poets have at all times deemed themſelves under an obligation to comply with the taſte of their age, and that the age of Owen was not much refined. It was an heroic and a learned age, but it was not diſtinguiſhed for delicacy.

The licentiouſneſs of ſome of his works injured the poet's fortune. For Anthony Wood informs us, that Owen was diſtreſſed by poverty, the epidemical diſeaſe of poets, and that he was diſappointed in the expectation of riches at the death of a wealthy uncle, who diſinherited him for ſome of his poetry; a misfortune which ſeveral of the unthrifty followers of the Muſes have raſhly incurred.

With all the faults of Owen, ſuch has been the ſterility of epigrammatic genius in our country, that he may ſtill retain the title, which he has acquired among foreigners, of the Britiſh Martial.

No. LXI. ON POLITIAN AND MURETUS, TWO ELEGANT WRITERS OF MODERN LATIN.

ONE of the brighteſt luminaries, which ſhone forth at the revival of learning, was Politian. A ſlight knowledge of the Greek was in his age a great and rare attainment. He not only underſtood the language ſo as to read it, but to compoſe in it. As a grammarian, as an orator, as a poet, he has been an object of general admiration. Genius he undoubtedly poſſeſſed in a degree ſuperior to the laborious ſcholars of his times; but his poetry is notwithſtanding greatly defective. In fire he abounds; but he is wanting in judgment and in art. There are many fine lines in his Ruſticus, and the diction is throughout remarkably ſplendid, though not always purely claſſical. The Latin poets of this period were not, indeed, ſo careful of the claſſical purity of their ſtyle as of harmony and brilliancy. Several of the poems of Politian are florid to exceſs, and far beyond that boundary which Auguſtan taſte delineates.

When we conſider the ſtate of literature at this early ſeaſon, we muſt allow that great applauſe, which has been paid to ſuch writers as Politian, juſtly due. They were under the neceſſity of breaking through a thick cloud of ignorance, and they had to contend with the rude taſte of their age before their writings could gain attention. Under every difficulty, they arrived, by the extraordinary efforts of emulation and genius, to a degree of excellence, which greatly reſembled that of the models which they ſelected for imitation.

The Greek verſes, which he wrote at a very early age, are highly commended. He prefixed the age at which he wrote them. Scaliger ſays he ſhould not have done this; for they are ſo excellent, that even his Latin verſes, which he wrote when a man, are by no means equal to them.

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The Letters of Politian are indiſputably elegant; but they are not without their faults. The ſtyle is ſometimes too elevated and oratorical. For the ſake of introducing a favourite phraſe, he often goes too far out of his way, and overburthens the ſenſe and the expreſſion by a redundancy of words.

With all his faults I muſt confeſs I have read him with great pleaſure. There is a charm in true genius, which compenſates defects, and often conceals them from the view.

Politian's real name was Baſſus. His aſſumed name was taken from the place of his birth. The adoption of names entirely new, was, at one time, not uncommon. Thus the real name of Eraſmus was Gerard. There was perhaps ſome degree of blameable oſtentation in aſſuming the appellations of Deſiderius and Eraſmus, both of which, according to their reſpective etymology, ſignify the amiable or the deſirable. Politian's adopted name was alſo choſen with a view to convey a favourable idea of his character. It is not improbable, that it was thought to expreſs, what indeed its derivation may intimate, a *poliſhed* taſte and underſtanding.

It is remarkable of Muretus, another elegant Latiniſt of modern ages, that he acquired a perfect knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, in one of which he wrote with great elegance, without an inſtructor.

He compoſed various critical and poetical works; but his Orations have always been celebrated as his beſt productions. They are indeed formed on the pattern of Cicero; they are written in a rapid and flowing ſtyle, and are not deſtitute of judicious obſervations. But, with reſpect to his diction, it muſt be ſaid of him, that he is leſs careful in the ſelection, than in the diſpoſition of words. This defect aroſe from a blameable precipitation, of which authors have ſometimes been vain.

We are told, that Muretus never tranſcribed any of his writings, that he ſcarcely ever read his productions twice, that he ſeldom made a change or interpolation, and ſtill leſs frequently a blot. This may account for his faults, but it cannot excuſe them. It is an inſult to

mankind, to present them with a work less perfect than the author might have rendered it. Haste and carelessness have often been avowed by writers, who wished to exalt the general opinion of their abilities; but they have usually, and as they deserved, lost that lasting and undiminished reputation which they might have enjoyed. While an author lives, prejudice and party may support his fame; but, when he is dead, these soon subside, and his real merit can alone preserve him from oblivion. Muretus has been justly and severely censured for having bestowed praises on the execrable massacre at Paris on St. Bartholomew's day.

He imitates Cicero; but, like a servile imitator, he imitates that which was least beautiful in his model. The very diffuse style of the Roman is still more diffuse in the orations of Muretus. The Asiatic manner, even in its best state, is not agreeable to a correct taste. It prevented the works of the greatest orator whom the world ever saw from being universally admired; and, when it is presented to the reader with aggravated deformity, it can scarcely be rendered tolerable by any concomitant beauties.

The Epistles of Muretus, though often elegant, are improperly written in the oratorial, rather than in the epistolary style. He seems to have studied and admired the Orations of Cicero more than his Epistles.

Muretus has been greatly commended for his poetry. Scævola Sammarthanus says of him, that Catullus is not more like himself than he to Catullus. I have not been able to discover any peculiar grace, either of sentiment or style, in the few little poems which remain on sacred subjects. But there are several on other occasions which are very pleasing, and far surpass, in classical purity and in sentiment, most of the Latin compositions of the age of Muretus. In the very pretty epitaph on Raphael there is a manifest impropriety, in representing the painter as praising himself in the highest style of commendation.

The verses entitled Tibur are pretty. The prologue to Terence's Phormio is easy and elegant. The Institutio Puerilis was intended to be no more than useful. The whole collection will furnish entertainment to

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him who has formed a taſte for modern, as well as antient, Latin Poetry. Catullus and Tibullus were evidently his patterns; but Rapin thinks, that, by an exceſſive affectation of fine Latinity, his odes are rendered ſtiff and unnatural.

It is true, that there are many ſucceeding writers who have excelled Muretus both in verſe and proſe; but his real excellencies, and the great reputation which he has poſſeſſed, will juſtly render him an object of attention to him, who, from his love of letters, becomes intereſted in the works of all who have contributed to advance their progreſs.

No. LXII. ON THE POET VIDA.

VIDA was born at Cremona, a city in Italy, at no great diſtance from the birth place of the poet whom he imitated. As a reward for his ingenious labours, the pope gave him the biſhopric of Alba. He died at the age of fifty-nine, in the year 1566.

There is perhaps no modern Latin poet more celebrated than Vida. He is juſtly recorded by the great De Thou, as one of the firſt among the Italians who applied poetry to ſacred ſubjects. He adds, that he adorned this province with pure and elegant verſe. This praiſe is certainly due to him; but ſome of the more zealous religioniſts ſeem to have endeavoured to recommend his ſacred poems as the beſt of his works. Even Scaliger, who cenſures his hymns as puerile, aſſerts that his Chriſtiad deſerves the higheſt praiſe. The truth is, that his Chriſtiad is the worſt of his greater works. He was ſenſible of it. He entered upon it with reluctance, and apologized for its defects with great diffidence, in an inſcription ſubjoined to the poem. He ſpeaks very modeſtly of his performance in his Epiſtle to Botta, and ſeems deſirous that his friends, and all the world, ſhould know, that he undertook ſo arduous a taſk ſolely with a view to ſhew his gratitude in obeying his patrons. Beſides many dull and heavy paſſages, which muſt occur to every reader,

reader, it is certain, that the poem falls ſhort of the dignity of its ſubject in almoſt every part. Among other faults, the critics have obſerved, that Vida has put into the mouths of Joſeph and St. John two ſpeeches, as long as thoſe of Æneas to Dido, to be uttered while Jeſus Chriſt was conveyed to the tribunal of Pilate. It is not to be ſuppoſed, ſay they, that the preſident of the council could have time or patience, in the midſt of a tumult, to attend to a long recital of all the particulars of the birth, education, and actions of our Saviour; beſides that, St. John is introduced explaining matters, of which himſelf could have had no certain knowledge till after the day of Pentecoſt.

But it is not pleaſant to dwell on the enumeration of defects. Almoſt every writer of genius has been ſometimes led to compoſe againſt his inclination. The advice and importunity of friends, or the neceſſities of particular ſituations and emergencies, have called forth a taſk at a time when the fine impulſes of genius have lain dormant. And it may be remarked, to the honour of Vida, that his moſt unpoetical works do credit to his heart and to his piety. This cannot be ſaid of the trivial writings of many of our moſt celebrated authors, which have ſometimes deviated, not only into abſurdity, but into immorality.

Vida himſelf, were he alive, would probably chuſe his three books of Poetics, his Bombyces, and his Scacchia, to form the baſis of his reputation. Theſe certainly poſſeſs a portion of Virgilian beauty. Though it is but a ſmall portion, it diffuſes a luſtre, which attracts and detains the notice of the claſſical reader. He undoubtedly practiſed the precept which he has given in his Poetics, of making Virgil the only object of imitation.

It is certainly of great conſequence to the ſtudent, who wiſhes to acquire the ſtyle of a particular author, not to diſtract his attention by the peruſal of many others. Vida, though ſucceſsful in his imitation, furniſhes an additional proof, how difficult it is for the moderns to contend with the ancients. He has many verſes interſperſed, which Virgil would not be aſhamed to own; but he does not ſupport that dignified uniformity

formity of elegance, which places the Mantuan in a rank ſuperior to all others, in the excellence of a correct and delicate kind of beauty. The firſt book contains many ſweet paſſages, particularly agreeable is the deſcription of the marks of a young genius, and its progreſs in poetical efforts. The whole performance is highly pleaſing, contains many uſeful hints, and deſerves the commendations of our Engliſh eſſayiſt on the art of criticiſm.

Modern eclogues in Latin have become too common to attract much notice when they are not remarkably excellent. They have been the trite medium of conveying the complaints of the ſurviving friend and the deſponding lover; and indeed have, by a little aukward contrivance, ſerved to communicate even political doctrines and ideas. Virgil, it is true, ſet the example, and it has been followed by Spencer and many others, even to a ridiculous degree. Vida's Eclogues, as they are laborious imitations of Virgil's ſtyle, have a conſiderable ſhare of grace and delicacy. The Epiſtle to the celebrated Gibertus is full of tender ſentiment, and exhibits that eaſe of language, which proves it to have flowed from the heart.

The Bombyces, or the Art of managing Silk-worms, has the ſame kind of merit, reſulting from a cloſe imitation of Virgil. It exhibits an equable flow of elegant verſe, but, I think, preſents not any ſtriking paſſages; though Scaliger ſays, it is the beſt of all Vida's works. It was a very proper preſent to a lady, the Marchioneſs of Mantua, to whom it is dedicated.

It is ſaid, that by reading the poem called Scacchia, or the Game of Cheſs, a perſon may learn to play it with ſkill. However that may be, the poem has always been admired for its ingenuity and elegance. The game of cheſs, indeed, the moſt ancient and the moſt generally known of all others, deſerves attention, were it merely on account of its antiquity and univerſal acceptance. Montaigne aſſerts, that it is too ſerious for a game; and it is certainly conſiſtent with reaſon, that games, which were adopted for recreation, ſhould not require a degree of painful attention. The etymology of the word Scacchia, the title of the poem, has puz-

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zled the learned. Bochart thinks, with great probability, that it is derived from the Perſian word Schachmat, which ſignifies the king is dead. For when the king in this game is reduced to ſuch a ſituation as not to be able to avoid captivity, the game is at an end. The king cannot be taken, therefore he is then dead.

Vida's odes are pretty, but ſeem not to riſe to any exalted degree of excellence. The Lamentation on the Death of his Parents, William Vida and Leona Oſcaſala, has many tender and affecting thoughts, which fully prove that it came from the heart. This, and a few other pathetic paſſages in his poems, evince that Vida would have excelled in elegiac poetry, if he had choſen to compoſe it.

Notwithſtanding ſome trifling inequalities, and many dull paſſages, where genius ſeems to be eclipſed by labour, the whole collection does honour to the taſte of the poet and his times. It is formed on the beſt models, and every where diſplays marks of an amiable diſpoſition, as well as of a poetical and claſſical talent. It is always benevolent and friendly to virtue; or, as he ſays himſelf, his numbers pleaſe, if they pleaſe at all, without guilt, and without the bitterneſs of ſatire.

No. LXIII. ON THE LATIN POET SANNAZARIUS.

ABOUT the time at which learning aroſe, as it were, from the dead, there appeared an illuſtrious race of writers in Latin verſe, whoſe force of genius, and elegance of language, entitle them to rank among the moſt celebrated of modern poets, with our Drydens, Priors, Popes and Parnells.

Parnell indeed, it is well known, borrowed ſeveral of his pieces from the modern Latin poets; and Pope is juſtly thought to have improved himſelf by the peruſal of them. Pope was ſo great an admirer of the Italian writers, who had chiefly excelled in Latin poetry, that he publiſhed a ſelect collection of their detached,

tached pieces. There happened, at that time, to prevail a prejudice againſt modern Latin poetry, occaſioned by a capricious cenſure of it by Boileau, and therefore theſe volumes were not greatly regarded; but we may readily believe, that a collection conducted by the taſte of Pope, could not but abound in beauty. His two volumes were, indeed, but an amplification of a ſmall edition publiſhed by an anonymous, but very judicious compiler; and Pope is blamed by a ſenſible though ſevere remarker on his life, for omitting the original preface. The preface of the anonymous editor is, indeed, equally remarkable for its modeſty and taſte; and I conjecture it to have been the production of ſome Cambridge ſtudent; as the book, though printed in London, was printed at the expence of Cambridge booksellers. The editor makes very ſhort yet judicious remarks on the ſeveral poets who compoſe his collection, particularly on Sannazarius, Fracaſtorius, Vida, Politian, and Caſtiglione. He has placed Sannazarius firſt in the collection; a rank to which the poet is entitled by his merit.

Sannazarius was born at Naples, in the fifteenth century. His ſingular learning and amiable morals ſoon introduced him to the court, where, though he was careſſed and advanced, he was not allured from polite letters by the temptations either of ambition or of pleaſure. He made poetry the elegant employment of his liberal leiſure; and, amidſt the buſineſs and diſſipation of a court, produced his admired poem, De Partu Virginis.

This poem is ſaid to have employed its elegant writer no leſs than twenty years in adding the laſt poliſh and improvement. He was indeed one of thoſe writers of exquiſite taſte, who can ſeldom ſatisfy their own ideas of excellence. Indeed, I believe, few fine writers pleaſe themſelves; for they who reach one great height of excellence, ſee their horizon extended as they riſe, and conſider the aſcent which they have already gained as an humble eminence, compared to ſummits which ſeem to aſcend in perpetual progreſſion, and to elude their moſt laborious endeavours. Apelles uſed to ſay, that Protogenes knew not when to take his hand from

the tablet which he was painting, and the ſame has been ſaid of this artiſt in a ſiſter art.

Of this poem, though the admirers have been warm and numerous, there have been cenſurers, whoſe opinions ſeem to be juſt. The ſtyle is beautiful and Virgilian; but the ſpirit is not always equal to the ſtyle. Eraſmus acknowledges that he read the poem with pleaſure; but at the ſame time laments, that a ſacred ſubject was not treated more conſiſtently with our ideas of ſanctity. Rapin allows, that the purity of the ſtyle is admirable; but aſſerts, that the fable of the piece is deſtitute of delicacy, and that the manner is by no means adequate to the dignity of the ſubject. It has alſo been thought a juſt cauſe of reprehenſion, that, in a ſacred poem, he has never mentioned the names of Jeſus or of Chriſt. He was afraid that ſuch names might diſguſt an ear accuſtomed to the majeſtic ſounds of the Latin language, and of Virgilian verſe. When he is introducing the prophecies which foretold Jeſus Chriſt, he is aſhamed to uſe the names of Iſaiah and David, but repreſent Proteus as ſinging them in a cave on the banks of the Jordan.

Sannazarius indeed affords an inſtance, among many others, how difficult it is to ſucceed in ſacred poetry. The poem De Partu Virginis, like the Chriſtiad of Vida, is, notwithſtanding the beauties of diction, the worſt production of its author. It is the buſineſs of poetry, to raiſe things from the low level of reality, to all the elevation which fancy and language can beſtow; but divine ſubjects are already ſo far raiſed above nature, as not to admit of poetical exaltation. The attempt has always, except in a few inſtances, diſcovered only the impotence and ambition of man. It is like an attempt to put Oſſa on Pelion, in order to invade the ſkies. A very judicious critic has ſhewn, in ſome of his prefaces to the Engliſh poets, that ſacred poetry, when uninſpired, can ſeldom reach exalted excellence.

The moſt popular of the poems of Sannazarius are his Piſcatory Eclogues. Like Pope's Paſtorals, they were juvenile compoſitions; and, like them, they may be produced as proofs, that improvement does not always

ways keep pace with progreſſive years. There is a happineſs in native genius, which is ſometimes loſt, rather than improved, with increaſing judgment and experience.

Piſcatory eclogues have been attempted by ſeveral writers; but they have not been ſucceſsful. It is indeed eaſy to conjecture why they have not ſucceeded. Paſtoral poetry is ſo far removed from reality and nature, that there ſeems to be little reliſh remaining among mankind for new works of that ſpecies. But we all know, that the manners of thoſe, who are engaged in fiſhing as a trade, are even coarſer and more brutal than thoſe of the modern ſhepherd. To put the elegant language of the Mantuan Muſe into the mouths of the crew of a fiſhing-ſmack, is ſuch a violation of truth and nature, as tends to excite ridicule by its incongruity.

The charms, however, of fine language and melodious verſe, can almoſt reconcile us to abſurdity of deſign; and theſe charms are very conſpicuous and captivating in the Eclogues of Sannazarius. Rapin has beſtowed great praiſe upon them; and Scaliger aſſerts, that they are the only Latin poems, of this kind, which, after Virgil, are worth peruſal. There is, indeed, a very conſiderable portion of that ſweet Virgilian grace, which has been ſo happily characteriſed in the epithets *molle et facetum*, the tender and the highly finiſhed. It is one of the diſtinguiſhing excellencies of this poet, that he has uſed the file with great delicacy and attention.

The Elegies of Sannazarius are admired for their eaſe and harmony, and his Epigrams have alſo held a high place among the compoſitions of modern Latiniſts. It is not conſiſtent with the deſign of my papers to introduce long citations in the learned languages; and therefore I muſt refer the claſſical reader to the poems themſelves, which are frequently to be found in collections, if not in ſeparate volumes.

I truſt, however, I ſhall want no apology for inſerting the following paſſage relative to Sannazarius, which I have accidentally fallen upon in a very fine writer and excellent critic of our own times.

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"I can by no means," says the late philosopher of Salisbury, "omit Sannazarius, whose Eclogues in particular, formed on the plan of a fishing life instead of pastoral, cannot be enough admired both for their Latinity and their sentiment. His fourth Eclogue, called Proteus, written in imitation of Virgil's eclogue called Silenus, may be justly valued as a master-piece in its kind."

The critic quotes several verses of this piece, and points out peculiar beauties. In a subsequent page, he cites several most beautiful passages from other poems, descriptive of the villa of Sannazarius at Mergillina. "It would be difficult," he concludes, "to translate these elegant morsels. It is sufficient to express what they mean collectively—that the village of Mergillina had solitary woods; had groves of laurel and citron; had grottos in the rock, with rivulets and springs; and that, from its lofty situation, it looked down upon the sea, and commanded an extensive prospect.

"It is no wonder that such a villa should enamour such an owner. So strong was his affection for it, that, when during the subsequent wars in Italy, it was demolished by the Imperial troops, this unfortunate event was supposed to have hastened his end."

He was buried near this delightful spot, the scene of his elegant enjoyments, and near the sweet poet of Mantua, the constant object of his successful imitation. An epitaph was engraved on his tomb, written by Bembo, and expressive of a wish, that flowers might arise from the sacred ashes; for that there reposed Sannazarius, next in place to Virgil, as next in genius.

I will venture to recommend this poet, and many other of the moderns, to the young or classical scholar; but, at the same time, it is necessary to add a caution: let original writers be first read; nor let others be attended to, till the taste is refined, and the judgment corroborated by the actual contemplation of the finished pieces of the Augustan age. Let Virgil be read almost to satiety, before the attention is diverted to the inferior moderns. Many a fine genius has been checked in

in its career by a too early perusal of writers, who, with all their elegance, are still subordinate, and who frequently are no more than imitators of imitators. When the taste and judgment are once rightly established, they may be finely exercised by sometimes contemplating copies as well as originals. Nor let any fear to sip at those fountains, from which several of our best English poets drank copiously.

No. LXIV. ON THE VENERABLE BEDE, AND SEVERAL OTHER EARLY WRITERS OF ENGLAND.

I Cannot help considering those writers, who arrived at distinguished eminence in a dark age, as the heroes of literature. In latter times, and indeed at present, there are various and powerful incitements to literary ambition. A competent education is become general. Books are easily procured, readers abound, and reputation and gain are the usual effects of remarkable improvement. But to have written much and successfully in the seventh century, is a proof of uncommon ardour and undaunted perseverance, such as was not to be cooled by neglect, nor obstructed by difficulty. Books, which must always supply the materials for writing, were at that time difficult to be procured; and after they were collected, and the compositions to which they gave occasion completed, few were capable of reading them, or of bestowing on them that approbation which they justly deserved. It is, indeed, difficult to form an adequate idea of the strength and resolution, which, amidst all these discouragements, could confine a student of that period to the labour of writing, and enable him to succeed in it to the admiration of succeeding ages.

The venerable Bede stands forth a very illustrious example of piety and literary application. He was born about the middle of the seventh century, at Jarrow,

row, at the mouth of the Tyne, and was early devoted to a monaſtic life. He confined himſelf to his ſolitary cell; and, though he was invited to Italy by the pope, preferred the ſweets of liberty, and of an unambitious life, which he ſpent in a regular alternation of prayers and ſtudy.

In the third volume of his hiſtory, he ſays of himſelf, "When I was ſeven years old, I was given up "by my relations to the very reſpectable Abbot Bene-"dict, and then to Ceolfrid, to be educated by them; "and paſſing my whole life in the ſame monaſtery, I "employed myſelf intirely in meditating on the ſcrip-"tures; and, amidſt the obſervance of a ſtrict diſci-"pline, and the daily buſineſs of chanting in the "church, I conſtantly found, in the exerciſes of learn-"ing, of teaching, and of writing, a ſweet amuſe-"ment."

His great work was an Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory; but his miſcellaneous productions are almoſt incredibly numerous. He is ſaid to have been ſkilled in Greek as well as in Latin, and he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his knowledge in poetry, rhetoric, general hiſtory, aſtronomy, arithmetic, chronology, philoſophy, and theology. So great was his character as a theologiſt, that his Homilies were appointed to be read in churches, even while he was alive, by the expreſs order of the biſhops. To this circumſtance he probably owes the title of Venerable; for, as he was alive, he could not eaſily be made a ſaint, and therefore he was honoured with an intermediate but moſt reſpectable epithet; an epithet ſignificant of the ſanctity of his character, which was as ſtrikingly marked by warmth and ſincerity of devotion as by extenſive learning.

He has not affected elegance of ſtyle; but he is not altogether inelegant. He is perſpicuous, if he is not pure; and conciſe and eaſy, if not full and harmonious. Though he is ſaid to have drawn his learning from the Greek and Latin authors, yet he ſeems to have attended more to their matter than their manner. He is credulous, and relates the fooliſh ſtories of an uncultivated age, as if they were true hiſtory. He undoubtedly has ſome faults of his age, and has been ſeverely

ſeverely cenſured for them by Du Pin, Dargonne, and Milton; but he has been extolled and admired by thoſe, whoſe names, both in number and weight, will be more than equivalent to his cenſurers; and, take him for all in all, as Shakeſpeare ſays, he muſt be conſidered as one of the earlieſt, and, on that account, as well as his intrinſic merits, one of the moſt brilliant ornaments of Engliſh literature. His Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, in five books, was publiſhed in the laſt century at Cambridge, with the Saxon paraphraſe of Alfred the Great. His various other works, a catalogue of which would exceed the limits of my paper, are ſcattered throughout all the moſt ancient and valuable libraries in the kingdom. Conſidering the improvements which have been made in the ſpace of a thouſand years, they may not probably be very uſeful, but they are ſtriking and curious examples of early learning and application, under great diſadvantages.

Alcuin was the ſcholar of Bede, and reflects honour on his maſter. His learning was deep and extenſive. He wrote not leſs than fifty treatiſes on important ſubjects, and in a ſtyle which, in his age, was not inelegant. He had the ſingular honour of introducing polite literature into France, whither he was invited by the king, by recommending the eſtabliſhment of the univerſity of Paris. He is ſaid alſo to have founded a ſchool at Tours, where he preſided as the maſter, and refuſed to leave his employment and inſtitution at the urgent invitation of the Emperor Charlemagne.

Joannes Scotus Erigena became a very diſtinguiſhed ſcholar in the eighth century. He was moſt probably a native of Scotland, though England and Ireland have put in their claims to the honour of his birth. He wrote many treatiſes; but his principal work was his five books on the Diviſion of Nature, printed in the laſt century at Oxford. He alſo, like Alcuin, was invited to France by Francis the Bald, with whom he lived on terms of intimate friendſhip, and even familiarity. Some of his writings were thought rather injurious to the Roman catholic religion; and, at the inſtigation of the pope, he was driven from Paris to his native country.

country. On his return, he was aſſaſſinated by the monks of Malmſbury, who ſtabbed him with penknives, in revenge for the freedom with which he had ventured to reprehend them. Bale relates a circumſtance, which tends to render this old author remarkable. He tells us, that he was the firſt profeſſor in Oxford, and was appointed to his office by Alfred himſelf, immediately after that great king had begun the eſtabliſhment of his noble univerſity.

But I mean not to invade the province of the biographer, nor to engage in literary hiſtory, beyond the limits which are uſually aſſigned to my papers. I have entered on this ſubject with a view to amuſe the young ſtudent, and to rouſe his diligence by examples of uncommon application and ſucceſs, under circumſtances the moſt unfavourable. I ſhall perhaps occaſionally reſume it; for I muſt own, for my part, I have always taken a particular pleaſure in reading anecdotes of the learned: and I cannot help thinking it a pleaſure neceſſarily connected with improvement; for we can ſcarcely read the accounts of them tranſmitted to us by critics and biographers, without admiring the many inſtances of virtue and learning which occur; and we inſenſibly learn to imitate what we habitually admire. As in the arts of painting and ſculpture, the beſt method of facilitating the progreſs of the artiſt is to place the fineſt models conſtantly in his view; ſo alſo in life and in letters it is of the higheſt importance to point out patterns of that actual excellence, which in our precepts and exhortations we have previouſly recommended. There is no method ſo ſucceſsful of diſplaying the blemiſhes to be avoided, and the beauties to be purſued.

No. LXV. ON SOME OF THE MOST CELEBRATED SCHOOLMEN.

EVERY lover of letters will find himſelf impelled, by curioſity, to enquire into the lives and writings of thoſe ſcholars, who, in any period of literature, have arrived at diſtinguiſhed reputation. Few have been viewed with greater admiration by the age in which they flouriſhed, than the profeſſors of ſcholaſtic theology. Scarcely any epithet which language afforded was thought adequate to their exalted merit.

Thomas d'Aquin, or, as he is commonly called, Thomas Aquinas, the angelic Doctor, was born in Naples, in the beginning of the thirteenth century. He was early devoted to philoſophy and theology, and one of his maſters is ſaid to have been a countryman of our own, Alexander ab Ales, the father of the ſchoolmen, and a *doctor irrefragabilis*. After a virtuous and laborious life, ſpent in an unremitted attention to learning, he died at the age of fifty. He was canonized in 1323, and has been read and admired for ages among a ſpecies of congenial ſcholars, who, in a very peculiar and unfaſhionable kind of learning, have diſplayed an aſtoniſhing depth and acuteneſs of intellect. He founded the ſect of the Thomiſts.

Thomas Aquinas ſtands without a rival at the head of the ſcholaſtic theologians. He is called by the Roman catholics the Homer of their theological writers; and, as a philoſopher, he acquired uncommon glory by his Comments on Ariſtotle, whoſe works held a place in the eſteem of the times at leaſt equal to the Bible. "Nor was he," ſays Eraſmus, "great only "in his own age. He exhibited a conſtancy of appli- "cation, a ſoundneſs of underſtanding, and a ſolidity "of erudition, which ſcarcely any of the modern di- "vines have equalled. He has made ſo excellent an "uſe of the learning then in vogue, that one cannot "help lamenting, that he enjoyed not the advan-

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"tages of the learned languages, and the other mate-"rials of politer literature." Had Aquinas been born two centuries later, there is ſcarcely any work which we might have not expected, in polite and ſolid literature, from ſuch activity, combined with ſuch penetration.

His works, together with his life, and the notes of the editors, make up no leſs than eighteen volumes in folio, and they were printed in 1594 at Venice.

Thomas Aquinas has been introduced to the obſervation of the Engliſh reader by an anecdote in the life of Young, in which it is recorded, that when Young applied to Pope for advice in the choice of books on firſt entering on the ſtudy of divinity, Pope recommended Thomas Aquinas. This is generally underſtood to have been no more than a joke; but, if Pope had been a zealous catholic, it might have been probable, that he took this artful method of making a convert to popery. The ſimplicity and enthuſiaſm of Young might have rendered him an eaſy dupe to jeſuitical zeal and artifice. But, I believe, Pope was too much attached to poetry to be a bigot to any ſyſtem of religion.

It appears from a paſſage in the works of Young, that he read enough of Aquinas, and of ſimilar writers, to have formed a very exalted idea of their merit. For ſays he, "the minds of the ſchoolmen were al-"moſt as much cloiſtered as their bodies; they had "but little learning and few books; yet may the "moſt learned be ſtruck with ſome aſtoniſhment at "their ſo ſingular natural ſagacity, and moſt exquiſite "edge of thought. Who could expect to find Pindar "and Scotus, Shakeſpeare and Aquinas, of the ſame "party? Both equally ſhew an original, unindebted "energy; the *vigor igneus*, and *cæleſtis origo* burn in "both, and leave us in doubt, whether genius is "more evident in the ſublime flights and beauteous "flowers of poetry, or in the profound penetration, "and marvellous, keen, and minute diſtinctions, called "the thorns of the ſchools."

It is ſaid that the great logician, Biſhop Saunderſon, was particularly fond of the *Secunda Secundæ* of Aquinas, and that he uſed conſtantly to carry with him this treatiſe,

treatiſe, together with Ariſtotle's Rhetoric and Tully's Offices. A book ſo much read and eſteemed by ſo great a man, and aſſociated with the works of Cicero and Ariſtotle, muſt have no inconſiderable merit.

Joannes Duns, who derived his *cognomen*, or additional name of Scotus, from his native country, was not much poſterior to Aquinas in time or in glory. He was the ſcholar of William Varro, an Engliſhman. The epithet of *ſubtile* was allotted to him, according to the faſhion of the times. The ſubtilty of his genius gave him, indeed, an incontrovertible claim to the title. Nothing, it is ſaid of him, was ſo dark, but he was able to enlighten it; nothing ſo enigmatic, but, like another OEdipus, he was able to reſolve it. But, alas! he carried his ſubtilty too far. The thread was ſpun ſo fine, that it became at laſt inviſible. Many terms were uſed by him, as they were indeed by all the ſchoolmen, which, if they conveyed any idea to himſelf, are yet too recondite to enlighten his leſs ſubtile readers. Who is able to explain his hæcceities, his intrinſic modes, and his inſolubles? And yet theſe are terms uſed to explain other books, and particularly the ſcriptures. Our countryman, John Bale, ſeverely cenſures ſuch theology. He calls this jargon of terms the chimeras of the ſophiſts, and juſtly obſerves, that the Roman catholic religion, dreſſed out in theſe forms, appears more fooliſh than the fabulous theology of Heſiod and Orpheus.

"Joannes Duns Scotus," ſays his panegyriſt Lanſius, "was learned to a miracle in logic, and in the "thorny parts of divinity. He founded the ſect of the "Scotiſts, which was oppoſed to the Thomiſts. He "was greater than Homer in one reſpect, ſince not "only cities, but kingdoms, contended for the honour "of his birth. The Engliſh, the Iriſh, the Scotch, "the French, and the Italians, have claimed him as "their own."

He was, however, unfortunate in his end; for being ſeized with an apoplexy, and ſuppoſed to be dead, he was buried too ſoon; and, reviving in the vault, called in vain for aſſiſtance, and died before he could be releaſed.

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The learning of the modern ages is very different from the learning of poor Duns, and no kingdom will now contend with Scotland for the honour of producing this ſubtile doctor. His diligence and ſagacity are, however, truly admirable. His works conſiſt of twelve volumes in folio, which were publiſhed in the laſt century at Lyons. Though none indeed will now read them, yet they ought to be preſerved as very curious monuments of a peculiar learning and genius, and of indefatigable induſtry.

Remond Lulle, or, as he is called in Latin, Raymundus Lullus, flouriſhed about the year 1300, nearly at the ſame time with Duns Scotus. He was born in Majorca, and has long been the boaſt of the Spaniards. His pretenſions and reputation were very high, and he became diſtinguiſhed by the title of *Doctor illuminatus*.

He is ſaid to have ſpent his youth in profligacy, and not to have been reformed till the age of forty; but he then engaged in the converſion of the Saracens, and after having ſuffered much ill treatment, was at laſt ſtoned to death. He was therefore, of courſe, worſhipped by the people of Arragon as a martyr. He was probably ſoon depoſed from this elevation; for there aroſe a party, who maintained that he had been inſtructed in all he knew by that ſcientific preceptor, the devil.

From his intercourſe with the Arabians, he acquired a knowledge of medicine, natural philoſophy, and aſtronomy. From all theſe combined, he deduced a ſcience of his own, as he repreſented it in Spain and Italy, that of chemiſtry and alchemy. An old writer, Robertus Conſtantinus, aſſerts that he had ſeen, in the Tower of London, a piece of pure gold made by the alchemical art of Raymundus Lullus.

He is ſaid to have written more than four thouſand treatiſes in philoſophy, medicine, and theology. He founded a ſect of Lulliſts, and was the inventor of a certain *method*, which our great Lord Bacon reprobates as uſeleſs and oſtentatious. It tended to teach the terms of art only, as if he who knows the words were ſure to comprehend the art itſelf. Rapin alſo cenſures it as

a *method*

a *method* which has no ſolidity, and which, ſo far from making men learned, does not even ſuppoſe them reaſonable.

He gave his logical work the pompous title of the Great Art; and he engaged that, by its aſſiſtance, any man, however ignorant, ſhould acquire the whole circle of the ſciences in three months. This work was to be accompliſhed by means of various diagrams, circular and triangular; and by the letters of the alphabet myſteriouſly tranſpoſed. He had, however, his admirers and followers; but his great art has been found of ſo little uſe to mankind, that the mode of its operation is almoſt unknown. They who are curious and idle, may find ſome account of it in Gaſſendus, Alſtedius, and Keckermannus.

Lullus is not indeed eſteemed for any real improvement in knowledge or ſound learning. He threw a veil of obſcurity over his writings, which has often ſerved as the cloak of ignorance. It is not ſurpriſing, that an alchemiſt ſhould affect the darkneſs and enigmatic air of a magician. In an age of profound ignorance, the leſs he was underſtood, the more he was admired.

Conſidering the diſadvantages under which they laboured, and the multitude and profundity of their works, many of theſe celebrated ſcholars exhibit very ſtupendous and animating examples of human induſtry. I have, indeed, collected theſe few obſervations on them, with a view to encourage the young ſtudent to diligence, by ſuggeſting to him what great works the human intellect is capable of performing in the ſhort period of a life; and, at the ſame time, to deter him from waſting the force of his genius on ſubjects uſeleſsly abſtruſe, or in any modes of exertion, which are not likely to become long and extenſively advantageous.

No. LXVI. ON THE VALUE OF AN HONEST MAN.

IT is the folly and misfortune of human nature to prefer the present to the future, the agreeable to the useful, the shining to the solid. We admire wit, beauty, wealth, titles, and all that sparkles with the brilliancy of external lustre; and though we probably approve the plain and homely virtues, which form the foundation of all real excellence, it is with the cold feelings of unimpassioned judgment. But in youth, when our choice in life is usually fixed, we are much more disposed to pursue what we admire, than what we only approve; and the consequence is, that the greater number form the earliest and most durable attachments to vanity. Sober maxims, rules of prudence, dictates of justice, plain truth, simplicity of manners, constancy in friendship, and regularity in business, appear with few charms in the eyes of him, who pants for the noble distinctions of being remarked at public places for elegance of dress, admired for the most splendid vis-à-vis, celebrated for his wit at a masquerade, smiled upon at court, and at length perhaps rewarded with a title, a riband, and a star. To obtain such a bliss, far other qualifications are necessary than the antiquated virtues of one's grandfather. The business must be done by dress, address, and, in short, the graces, the graces, the graces! With respect to honesty, I have somewhere read, that a man of honour, on hearing honesty attributed to his fashionable friend, expressed some degree of displeasure at the panegyric, and declared, that such a compliment was only fit for his footman. Our first question concerning a man, whose character we wish to learn, is seldom, is he honest? but, is he rich, is he able, is he a man of fashion?

Now there have been of late, and indeed at all times, many men of fashion totally destitute of moral honesty. They have possessed every personal grace, and every pleasing

pleasing accomplishment. They could sing, dance, and play on musical instruments. They could converse with the grave and the gay, and adapt all their sentiments to the present company. They had that freedom which is called charming, and which enabled them to push themselves into all companies, and accost men of rank and character by their surnames, and without any respectful addition. All this could not fail to excite the praise of the ladies, and the envy of the gentlemen. But in the end it has been found, that these charming men, with the appearance of whatever is good and agreeable, have been the first to overreach in a bargain, exceedingly successful in the profession of swindling, and particularly adroit at a forgery.

So despicable and detestable do the characters of such men appear on detection, that I cannot help thinking honesty is the best ornament, as well as the best policy. It is indeed a diamond of the first water, while all the shewy, dazzling, unsubstantial qualities, which the artful assume for the purposes of deceit, are no more than French paste or paltry glass, at once both taudry and brittle.

I would recommend unfeigned honesty as ornamental; because, such is the nature of the human heart, it is infinitely more likely to be pursued and valued by the majority of mankind, when they think it will conciliate the love and admiration of each other, than when they view it merely as a moral excellence. The man of reading, reflection, and cultivated mind, will want no motives to pursue it, but those which are suggested by his own conscience and the delicacy of his sentiments. But to the mass of mankind, composed of all ages, all ranks, all tempers, all professions, all parties, and all religions, it is necessary to render any particular virtue, which the moralist wishes to promote, both lovely and honourable. Interest, passion, and fancy, must be taught, if possible, to second the decisions of reason. She is too often deposed by her refractory subjects, whose obedience indeed is seldom to be relied on, but when it is in some degree spontaneous.

It cannot surely be denied, that the quality which pervades every part of human life, and tends immediately

ately to render it ſecure, comfortable, and honourable, is itſelf one of the moſt honourable which can be poſſeſſed by a human creature; and ſuch is that uncelebrated virtue, common and moral honeſty. Without it, ſociety is a den of thieves, and men are to each other as wolves and foxes.

Every day's experience evinces the juſtneſs of that repreſentation in the ſcriptures, in which it is ſaid, that the heart is deceitful above all things, who can know it? In the moſt trifling intercourſe, where neither pleaſure nor profit are in view, the propenſity to deceit appears in the little promiſes, profeſſions, compliments, which are mutually made, uſually *without* any ſincerity of regard, and often with real and inveterate averſion. But where intereſt is in view, the machinations made uſe of, for the accompliſhment of the mean and mercenary purpoſe, are often ſuch as might characteriſe an infernal agent. Plauſibility *is*, at the ſame time worn as a cloak; and he who has a deſign on your purſe, your life, or your country, will aſſume all the appearances of cordial friendſhip and unpolluted honour. I believe it is well known, that the graces, the agreeable qualities, as they are *called*, and the appearance of the moſt amiable virtues, were poſſeſſed in perfection by a Perreau, a Dodd, a Donellan, and a Delamotte.

Indeed, this common honeſty, as it is named, is far leſs common than our pride is willing to ſuppoſe. *But* if it could be introduced into all the employments of life, the golden age would be reſtored. I will imagine the event as already accompliſhed, and will pleaſe myſelf for a moment with the viſionary proſpect of the happy conſequences. I ſee the brightneſs diffuſing *itſelf* through all the regions of ſociety, from the loftieſt mountain to the loweſt vale; or, to ſpeak in a ſtyle without figure, the happy conſequences are equally viſible in the prince and in the peaſant.

The nobles of the land, inſtead of making *uſe of* their advantages and influence for the purpoſe of private and family emolument, or for the indulgence of their ſelfiſh and ſenſual paſſions, devote themſelves to the ſervice of the community, defend its liberty, preſerve

ſerve and amend its laws, give countenance to its religion, patronize learning, and encourage all the inventions of ingenuity, which can contribute to the ornament or accommodation of human life. Of how few among the nobility of Europe, and even of our own country, can all this be predicated with any regard to veracity? But is it not diſhoneſt to enjoy the advantages of wealth and rank, to which, by the law of nature, and perhaps by their own merit, they have no more right than their footmen behind their chairs, without making any return to the community, by whoſe laws they poſſeſs their political elevation? When they traffic for boroughs, ſell their own ſuffrages in the ſenate, ſpend their days at gaming-tables, cockpits, horſe-races, ſtables, and dog-kennels, they may indeed be men of honour, as honour is now underſtood, but I am ſure they are not honeſt men.

If the plain principles of common honeſty poſſeſſed a real efficacy on the conduct of life, we ſhould no longer ſee men of independent fortunes meanly devoting their lives to no other purpoſe but to encreaſe that which is already too large for their merits, by dealing in life-annuities, mortgages, engaging in banking-houſes, toiling in the Alley, raiſing rents, or ſpending what they have happened to inherit, in vanity, luſt, intemperance, and oſtentation. They would ſee the juſtice of making ſome return to the ſociety in which they live, for the exemption they enjoy from labour and neceſſity. They would dedicate their time and attention to benevolence, beneficence, to ſetting good examples, and removing all evil, as far as their influence extends. It is not enough that they are merely harmleſs; for with certain advantages, and in certain ſituations, to be only negatively good is to be poſitively bad.

If honeſty were duly regarded in the profeſſions, we ſhould not be over-run with bold pretenders, who make their way in the world by dint of effrontery, and deceive all who truſt in their pretenſions. We ſhould ſee the clergy more anxious in the buſineſs of inſtructing and reforming their pariſhes, than in collecting their tythes; fond of reſiding among their ſimple ruſtics, inſtead of viſiting them only once a year for that mo-

ney, which is to be ſpent at watering-places, theatres, balls, and aſſemblies. We ſhould not hear ignorant preachers deceiving the vulgar by noiſe and nonſenſe, and pretending to ſuperior ſanctity and illumination. We ſhould oftener ſee that dignified character a worthy pariſh prieſt, performing his duties with conſcientious regularity, and diffuſing comfort all around him.

In the medical walks we ſhould have no quacks. The phyſician would be more attentive to the patient whom he ſees ſtretched on the bed of death or diſeaſe, than he is to the fee. Medicines would be unadulterated; the poor treated as tenderly as the rich; ignorant apothecaries would not procure diplomas from Edinburgh, and put themſelves off, among the inconſiderate crowd, for regular phyſicians, adorned by the honours of approving univerſities which they never ſaw. Such a deceit upon mankind deſerves ſevere reprehenſion; and, indeed, the aſſuming of doctors degrees, without any juſt title, tends both to miſlead the world, and to vilify thoſe proper honours of real merit; and it ought to be immediately checked either by law or by ridicule.

In law there is ſcarcely any department which would not undergo a moſt valuable reformation, if we could once gain the important point of rendering honeſty more lovely in the eyes of its profeſſors than lucre. The glorious inſtitutions of conſenting ſenates would then be uniformly a bleſſing to mankind, as they were deſigned; and would never be converted to engines of oppreſſion in the hands of an artful counſellor, or a harpy pettifogger.

In the army, no one would receive his country's wages, who would not fight on every proper occaſion.

In trade, we ſhould ſee no circumvention, no advantage taken of the wants and diſtreſſes of others, no deceiving of the ſimple and unſuſpecting, no vending of bad commodities as the beſt, no forgeries, no ſwindling, and few bankruptcies. Juſtice would hold the ſcales, and the traders profits would receive an addition of more than a hundred *per cent.* in the advantage of a good name and a good conſcience.

In literature, for here alſo the deceitfulneſs of the heart of man is often conſpicuous, there would be no

partial

partial judgments, no puffery, no plagiarism, no apologies for vice, irreligion, or tyranny, no catchpenny compilations; evils which spring from the perversion of literature, from knavery and from avarice, and at once disgrace both learning and human nature. Among the hackies of literature, as some of its subordinate professors and managers of it have been justly called, such villanies, rogueries, and sharping tricks, are practised, as might disgrace the mercantile Jews of Duke's Place. But in the condition of things which I have supposed, all would be fair and beautiful in the walks of learning, as in the ancient Lyceum or Portico.

Happy state! But, alas, it is imaginary! It might, however, I am convinced, in some degree, be realized, if due care were taken in education, to render the least tendency to deceit disgraceful, and obnoxious to punishment; and every ingenuous, open, honest action honourable; for Honour is the nurse of the Virtues as well as of the Arts. Instead of which, the writings of some modern instructors tend immediately to recommend every species of deceit at that early age, when a little evil sown in the bosom by the tutor, cannot fail to take root, and grow to a stupendous magnitude.

Early and late, by night and by day, in season and out of season, I would inculcate on the breast of boys the just remark of the moral poet, that an honest man is the noblest work of God.

No. LXVII. REFLECTIONS ON THE ORIGIN AND EFFECTS OF SCULPTURE, WITH MISCELLANEOUS REMARKS ON IT.

THAT the human mind is naturally delighted with the works of imitation, is a remark of the earliest philosophers; and the justness of it has been uniformly confirmed by every subsequent enquiry. Even those objects, which in the reality disgust the senses, when they are imitated by the skilful artist, please the imagination; but if imitation is capable of con-

verting deformity to beauty, and of teaching inelegance to pleaſe, its influence muſt be much greater, when the object imitated originally excites ideas of the ſublime and beautiful.

Juſt repreſentations of the irrational or inanimate creation, are indeed, in a great degree pleaſing; but the higheſt delight which the fine arts can beſtow, is derived from imitations of human nature. The variegated landſcape is, perhaps, viewed with greater complacency on the canvas, than in the natural appearance; becauſe imitation adds a grace to the intrinſic beauty. The bloom of the grape, the bluſh of the peach, and the crimſon of the roſe, deſigned by nature to pleaſe, may perhaps pleaſe yet more when artificially preſented to the view by her hand-maiden. The ſame obſervation may juſtly be extended to the imitation of animals, and the placid ſcenery of ſtill-life. All theſe are found to pleaſe the imagination, but not to elevate the mind. They inſpire a complacency, but do not warm with ſentiment, or animate to virtue. To touch the heart with ſympathy, to excite the nobler affections, and to give a maſculine pleaſure, man muſt be the object of imitation. That general connection which ſubſiſts between all who partake of humanity, cauſes a general concern in the intereſts of each individual. Man, indeed, views the actions and paſſions of men with all the ſolicitude of one concerned in the event, but looks down upon the lower parts of the creation with the diſpaſſionate curioſity of a diſintereſted ſpectator.

To repreſent the attitudes of his actions, and the features of his paſſions, is the principal buſineſs of *Sculpture*; and though a conſiderable degree of its excellence depends on the delicacy of manual execution, yet has it ever maintained a diſtinguiſhed place among the arts which require a fine imagination. Nature, indeed, lies open to the inſpection of the learned and of the unlearned, of the ſtupid and of the ingenious; but the man of fine feeling, and of elegant taſte, can alone perceive and imitate her more delicate traits, her more captivating, though leſs obvious, allurements.

The

The first productions of this art probably owe their origin to religion. Too gross to conceive immaterial ideas of the Deity, the vulgar wanted some sensible object to fix their attention, and excite their enthusiasm. Thus he, whose temple is all space, and whose altar the universe, was confined in his residence to some rude image, graven by the hand of idolatry: but however derogatory from the dignity of the Supreme Being, or inconsistent with the reason of man, the practice has been peculiarly favourable to the arts of imitation. The statue that was formed as an object of religious adoration, has, indeed, failed in its original purpose; but it has been viewed with a degree of wonder little less than worship.

And, indeed, it is to be presumed, that few will wish that idolatrous attention, which is at present paid to the statues of the ancient deities, forbidden: for whenever they shall cease to be admired, they will cease to be imitated. Such an event every friend to just taste will depreciate, since to renounce the models of the ancients, is to renounce the most captivating embellishment of art, an adherence to simplicity and nature. While a *Venus de Medicis*, and an *Apollo Belvedere*, shall continue to be standards of excellence, no one can with reason apprehend, lest the chaste graces of real elegance should be sacrificed to the false glare of Gothic affectation.

To do justice to the remains of antiquity by description, requires a pen as masterly as the artist's chisel. A Virgil should exhibit the ideas of a Praxiteles. A professor of the art may, perhaps, find technical terms adequate to a technical description. He may expatiate on proportion, and dictate rules for forming a judgment; but the language of an artist can seldom be completely understood but by artists.

Comparisons are frequently made between the respective beauty, the value, and the utility, of the several arts. One of the best judges of antiquity has asserted, in a well-known passage of his works, that all the arts which tend to polish and refine human nature, are united by a common bond. That painting, poetry, and sculpture, nearly approximate to each other, is obvious

obvious on the ſlighteſt review. They have conſtantly reflected images on each other, and joining like the Graces, hand in hand, have, from the union of their force, commanded in all ages univerſal admiration. If the Mantuan Muſe drew her moſt beautiful pictures from the originals of Sculpture, to the Muſe of Homer, on the other hand, has Sculpture been indebted for her maſter-piece. The ſublime idea of a Being, who ſhook the heavens with his nod, exiſted originally in the poet's mind. The artiſt, however, embodied the ideal form, and may be ſaid to have wanted only Promethean aid to have realized the creature of imagination. The marble form has been transferred to canvas, and the repreſentation of the tablet to the marble, with equal applauſe both to the arts and to the profeſſors: and though ſome have eſſayed to aſcertain the ſuperiority of one or other of theſe ſiſter arts, yet as it is invidious to give a diſtinguiſhing preference to either, when each endeavours to exalt the other, it may be more candid to aſſert, with Horace on a ſimilar occaſion, that they equally require and communicate mutual aſſiſtance, with all the benignity of diſintereſted friendſhip.

Sculpture is not, any more than the other arts, confined to imitations of the human form. Subordinate to ſtatuary, are many other operations of the chiſel, which require both ingenuity of deſign, and ſkill of execution. The marble urn, and the ſepulchral monument, have ever been the chief ornaments of manſions dedicated to the Deity. The palaces of princes have derived leſs ſplendour from the profuſion of finery, and the glittering of magnificence, than from the foliage of the Corinthian capital, and the elegant wreaths of the feſtoon: and though the modern invention of multiplying the works of the artiſt, by devices which require no ingenuity, has proſtituted the ornaments of a temple to the gaudineſs of a ſuburbian villa, and the decoration of a palace to the embelliſhment of a tradeſman's door-poſt; yet muſt not he, whoſe hand formed the original vaſe, or ſculptured the ſtoried urn, loſe that praiſe which is ever due to the inventive artiſt.

It

It belongs to ſculpture, as well as to painting, not only to repreſent ſingle figures, but to combine them in a group. The relievo is a marble picture; though it wants thoſe graces of the canvas, which reſult from a due mixture of light and ſhade, and from a variety of colours, yet it poſſeſſes ſome advantages which may ultimately compenſate the defect. Expoſure to the weather, the commoneſt accidents, and the inſenſible depredations of time, ſoon deſtroy the comparatively tranſient productions of the pencil; but the marble tablet defies the corroding tooth of ages, and may ſurvive even a deluge or a conflagration. There remains not a ſingle painting of Parrhaſius or Apelles, of Timanthes or Protagoras, by which we can judge of the juſtice of thoſe praiſes ſo laviſhly beſtowed on them by Pliny, Quintilian, and Lucian; but many antient relievos continue, at the preſent day, in all their original perfection.

Sculpture diſplays peculiar grace and excellence, when it condeſcends to work in miniature. The gem, however precious and beautiful, receives additional value, and more attractive beauty, from the hand of the artiſt. The features of the hero and philoſopher when marked on the ſtone, whoſe coheſion is like that of adamant, are tranſmitted to the lateſt ages, unhurt by accidents, and unimpaired by time. Thus is the votary of learning enabled to behold the countenances of thoſe whoſe atchievements aſtoniſh, whoſe writings charm, and whoſe precepts improve him; and after the lapſe of ſome thouſand years, to indulge the natural deſire of viewing the real aſpect of men who ſhone in the field, and in the cabinet, or who dignified the portico or the academy. When all other ſources of information have failed, the figure on the gem has often illuſtrated beauties, and cleared obſcurities in the claſſics and the hiſtorians. Of theſe ſmaller productions of the ſculptor, the ingenuity of modern invention, ſtimulated by the hopes of gain, has found means to multiply copies without number; but though the copies ſhould leſſen the pecuniary value, they cannot diminiſh the intrinſic merit of the originals.

That

That ſpecies of ſculpture, which is diſtinguiſhed by the ſpecific appellation of *Engraving on Copper*, was totally unknown to the antients. By the co-operation of this ſiſter art, the productions of painting are univerſally diffuſed, and the ornament reſerved in the gallery of an individual, becomes the embelliſhment of every habitation. However great its uſes, and exalted its perfection, it muſt be confeſſed, by every impartial obſerver, to owe a great degree of its advancement to the artiſts of our own country; and it were eaſy to enumerate ſome works of Engliſh engravers, of which the juſtneſs of repreſentation, and the delicacy of execution, have not been ſurpaſſed by any age or any nation.

No. LXVIII. THAT THE ENGLISH POSSESS A FINE TASTE FOR SCULPTURE, AND THAT IT OUGHT TO BE ENCOURAGED FOR ITS MORAL EFFECTS.

THERE are ſome, who, with a ſpirit too confined for the liberality of philoſophy, have excluded from all pretenſions to refined taſte, that part of mankind which nature has placed in the northern regions. This faculty has been limited to thoſe happier mortals, who inhale the balmy breezes of the warmer climates. That theſe arts have been moſt ſucceſsfully cultivated in the warmer countries of Europe, cannot be denied; but let it not be ſaid, that any of the faculties of the free-born mind are local. Nor let it be haſtily concluded, that the Engliſh, who are claſſed by theſe philoſophers among the northern ſavages, but who are known to poſſeſs the mental powers in a ſtate of vigour equal at leaſt to the reſt of the world, are deſtitute of taſte, of that faculty, which adds a grace to the exertions of all others, and without which the ſtrongeſt efforts of the mind have an appearance of illiberality. If it was late before our artiſts made any conſiderable

conſiderable proficiency in Sculpture, it muſt not be immediately inferred, that they were incapable of excellence: but that, as it is inconteſtibly true, they did not attempt it. To expect that the art ſhould attain perfection before it is an object of national attention, is no leſs unreaſonable than to require the fruit in maturity before the plantation of the tree.

The ſun-ſhine of royal or public patronage can baffle the rigours of the climate, and raiſe luxuriant vegetation on the bleakeſt mountain. Rewarded by a prince, and encouraged by a people, it is not to be wondered, that Sculpture has among us made rapid advances to attainable perfection. It were, indeed, eaſy to enumerate names which would do honour to the ſchools of Greece, and of antient and modern Italy; but to praiſe living merit, is frequently to excite envy without conferring fame. The ingenious artiſt then muſt be content to appeal to poſterity for unalloyed applauſe; and, when the tongue of Envy ſhall be wearied with detraction, merited praiſe will find a willing audience. There are ſculptors among us of the preſent day, whoſe fame will be as durable as the marble which they ſhape, and who, while they carve the block, may promiſe themſelves, like Thucydides, an everlaſting poſſeſſion.

Thoſe arts, however, after all that has been ſaid in their praiſe, which tend to flatter the imagination without amending the heart, and the utility of which appears to conſiſt in their adminiſtration to pleaſure, will, perhaps, be judged unworthy a ſerious attention by the rigid votaries of ſevere virtue. Too wiſe to be captivated with pleaſure, they ſeek only for improvement. The pill that contributes to health, they can ſwallow without requiring it to be covered with gold, or ſweetened with honey; but to condemn the productions of the chiſſel as merely inſtrumental to delight, is to aſſume that as a conceſſion which can never be granted. In truth, the imitative arts are capable of conveying moral inſtruction in the moſt effectual manner, as their operation is inſtantaneous. They require not the deductions of reaſon, which can only be made by cultivated intellects; but by appealing to the ſenſes, which are ſometimes combined in great perfection with

the rudeſt minds, they ſtrike immediately and irreſiſtibly on the ſuſceptible heart. The maſter's hand can give to matter the features of the ſoul, and impreſs on the rude block thoſe thoughts and paſſions, which naturally excite congenial ſentiments and ſympathetic emotions; and the mind, which, perhaps, could never be ſenſible of the beauty of virtue from the reaſonings of a Plato, or a Socrates, may be captivated with her amiable form when diſplayed by a Phidias or a Praxiteles.

No man of ſenſibility can walk in the repoſitories of the illuſtrious dead, where the forms that moulder beneath his feet are repreſented in marble on the walls, without feeling, as he treads the ſolemn aile, the moſt virtuous ſenſations. His faculties ſeem to ſtretch, and his virtues to expand, in efforts to reach the level of ſuch exalted ſociety. He catches the contagion of virtue by intuition, he forms heroic reſolutions of emulating the excellence he admires, and, perhaps, ventures to entertain a ſecret hope, that he may one day fill a nich in the venerable circle of departed worthies. The deſcendant bluſhes to degenerate from his anceſtors, who ſeem to view him from the ſacred walls, and would upbraid him with his baſeneſs. He feels himſelf ſtimulated to equal, if not to ſurpaſs their glories.

Sculpture has, likewiſe, another no leſs efficacious, though more indirect, influence on the morals. It has, in common with all the fine arts, an inviſible effect in ſoftening the temper and humanizing the manners, an effect which will, perhaps, be felt and acknowledged by none but men of delicate taſte and elegant attainments. The votaries of gain, of luxury, or of groſs pleaſure, have loſt, by the groſſneſs of their enjoyments, that nice ſuſceptibility of impreſſions, that tenderneſs of feeling, which can alone perceive, with full force, the pleaſures of imagination. The vulgar eye gazes with equal ſatisfaction on the canvaſs of a Titian, and the daubings of a ſign-poſt, and diſcovers no more ingenuity in the works of the ſtatuary, than in the rude image of the mere mechanic: but they whoſe natural feelings have been properly improved by culture, nor have yet become callous by attrition with the world know,,

know, from experience, how the heart is mollified, the manners poliſhed, and the temper ſweetened, by a well-directed ſtudy of the arts of imitation. A fine ſenſibility of artificial excellence inſenſibly extends itſelf to the perception of natural and moral beauty; and the ſtudent returns from the artiſts gallery to his ſtation in ſociety, with a breaſt more diſpoſed to feel and to reverberate the endearments of ſocial life, and of reciprocal benevolence.

Sculpture claims, indeed, the power of exciting virtue, and the privilege of rewarding it. Many of the great benefactors to mankind have been animated in danger, and ſupported in fatigue, by the enlivening hope of enjoying a future exiſtence in the memory of poſterity. Satisfied with this recompence in reverſion, heroes, patriots, and philoſophers, have neglected the calls of intereſt, and the allurements of pleaſure, to advance the happineſs of ſociety, and to adorn humanity. The ſweet ſolace of their pain, the compenſation of their labours, for which the heart has often panted, and every faculty has toiled, may be ultimately conferred by the hand of the ſtatuary. Let not, therefore, the art be proſtituted to perpetuate inſignificance or vice, and to gratify the vanity of undeſerving opulence, which poſſeſſes the power of rewarding virtue, and of beſtowing immortality on periſhable excellence.

No. LXIX. ON THE PROPRIETY OF EXTENDING CLASSICAL STUDIES TO NATURAL AND EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY, AND UNITING PHILOLOGY WITH SCIENCE.

STUDENTS who have been moſt attached to claſſical literature, and who conſequently have ſucceeded beſt in it, have often been groſsly ignorant of thoſe pleaſing parts of ſcience, the laws and operations of nature.

Were

Were it only for the ſake of variety, and the pleaſure reſulting from it, I would beg leave to ſuggeſt to claſſical ſcholars the propriety of extending the objects of their purſuit. Poetry, hiſtory, moral philoſophy, and philology, though truly delightful of themſelves, will become more ſo, when the ſameneſs of the ideas which they preſent, is relieved by the beautiful and diverſified ſcenes of natural philoſophy. It is like going into a beautiful country which we never ſaw before, or like the arrival of a new ſeaſon of the year, when we make an excurſion from claſſical ground, on which we have long dwelt, into the territories of natural ſcience. An aſſemblage of ideas entirely new is preſented to the mind of him, who never before deviated from the flowery paths of philology. His mind is refreſhed with variety, and enriched with new acquiſitions, and he returns to criticiſm, hiſtory, poetry, and whatever elſe conſtitutes polite letters, with a more eager appetite.

A knowledge of nature and of arts, as well as ſciences, ſupplies a copious ſource of new ideas to the writer. Moral maxims and hiſtorical examples can ſcarcely fail, after letters have been long cultivated, to loſe the grace and attraction of novelty. But from natural philoſophy, new alluſions, new exemplifications, new ſimilitudes, new compariſons, and new images of all kinds, are eaſily deduced. What is borrowed from this department cannot have been anticipated by the antients, ſince how little did they know of electricity, magnetiſm, hydroſtatics, optics, pneumatics, and a thouſand other moſt entertaining ſubjects, in which philoſophy appears ſubſervient to manufactures and the accommodation of common life! A man may have read the beſt Greek and Latin claſſics, and ſcarcely have one juſt idea of the orb on which he lives, or of its natural and artificial productions.

I wiſh, indeed, that claſſical taſte may always be united with a competent knowledge of the ſciences. I am convinced it would be for the advantage of both. For if it is true, on the one hand, that claſſical ſcholars have been often moſt diſgracefully ignorant of things,

things, it is alſo true, on the other, that natural philoſophers have often been unable to give their diſcoveries that pleaſing dreſs which claſſical taſte alone can beſtow, and which is neceſſary to allure the general attention. By a reciprocal participation of each other's knowledge, the claſſic would become more ſolid, and the naturaliſt more pleaſing. At the ſame time, it muſt be confeſſed, that ſolid ſcience ought not to be ſuperfluouſly decorated, nor delivered in the ſtyle of an affected rhetoric. Beſides that, a profuſion of miſplaced ornaments is always unpleaſing; tropes, figures, and unneceſſary epithets, would introduce an obſcurity moſt unfavourable to the progreſs of ſcience. The Attic ſtyle ſeems, indeed, peculiarly ſuited to ſcientific productions; and, if Ariſtotle is too little ornamented, yet his chaſtity, correctneſs, and purity, ſeldom fail to pleaſe on a diligent peruſal. Pliny the Elder is, however, a more agreeable model of ſtyle, though his ſelection of matter is extremely culpable.

We have, indeed, many writers in natural philoſophy, who were trained in claſſical ſchools, and who were early poliſhed by the elegancies of philological literature. But in their ſubſequent ſtudies they ſeem to have relinquiſhed the models of the golden ages, and to have written with little ſolicitude to pleaſe by their ſtyle, provided they were able to communicate information. The conſequence has been, that many fine diſcoveries of original philoſophers have either paſſed unnoticed by the common reader, or they have been repreſented in a ſtyle of languid and flowery deſcription by writers, whoſe knowledge of nature was too ſuperficial to enable them to communicate it with accuracy.

But, in truth, it muſt be allowed that claſſical ſcholars have been much oftener ignorant of phyſiological learning, than natural philoſophers of polite letters. Many of our very eminent poets, when they have occaſionally introduced deſcriptions of the animal, vegetable, or foſſil productions of nature, have committed egregious miſtakes. To the honour of the poet of the Seaſons, it has been remarked, that he was an accurate

curate obſerver of thoſe appearances which he delighted to deſcribe.

But, without inſiſting on the utility of phyſiological ſcience as preparatory to compoſition, one may aſk, who is there that pretends to the character of the general ſcholar, or the man of a comprehenſive mind, that would chuſe to live his days, without ſeeing the new world, which is opened to his view by the microſcope, the teleſcope, and all the curious machines of the experimentaliſt? What ſtudent would neglect to look into the entertaining volumes of a Ray, a Derham, an Adams, a Baker, a Swammerdam, a Keil, a Rowning, a Hales, a Cotes, a Clare, a Halley, a Boerhaave, a Linnè, a Buffon, a Ferguſon, or a Pennant? To ſhut our eyes on ſuch glorious ſcenes as they exhibit is, as Milton calls it, an injury and ſullenneſs againſt nature. In this age and country, lectures in experimental philoſophy are read in every part of the kingdom, and the ſtudent has an opportunity of acquainting himſelf with the moſt curious natural phænomena at a very trifling expence, and without the trouble of furniſhing and managing a coſtly and complicated apparatus; an ineſtimable advantage, and ſuch an one as the philoſophers of antiquity would have traverſed the world to enjoy. I have been aſtoniſhed to ſee how very careleſs even men of ſenſe and liberal education, are in this matter, and how few comparatively attend the lectures of the experimentaliſt. Even in the univerſity of Oxford, I can remember, it was by no means univerſal to attend the profeſſors, who read moſt ingenious lectures on aſtronomy, chemiſtry, and natural philoſophy. The claſſical ſcholars ſeemed rather to deſpiſe that kind of learning; and, indeed, we often undervalue what we do not underſtand.

I have frequently been ſurpriſed to find how few, in compariſon, viſit that noble repoſitory of nature's productions, the Britiſh Muſeum. Many thouſands, and thoſe too in the more enlightened ranks, have lived and died within a mile or two of it, without having once had the curioſity to inſpect it. Ye ſhades of Pliny and Ariſtotle, how indignant muſt ye have been, if

ye

ye obſerved a people, pretending a love of ſcience, yet regardleſs of ſuch invaluable treaſures, even at their thresholds!

That the vulgar and illiterate ſhould be incurious is not ſurpriſing; but that the claſſical ſcholar ſhould be totally ignorant of nature's works, is no leſs aſtoniſhing than diſgraceful. To thoſe who are induced, by their knowledge of a few languages, and of the claſſics, to think themſelves completely accompliſhed in all human learning, I will recommend the peruſal of the notes to the preface of Chambers's Dictionary.

No. LXX. ON THE EFFECTS OF THE BAD EXAMPLE OF THE GREAT AMONG THEIR MENIAL SERVANTS, DOMESTICS, AND DEPENDANTS.

IT is found by experience, that there are few orders in the community more profligate than the ſervants and domeſtic dependants in rich and noble families. They are greatly to be pitied, as many cauſes concur to render their corruption almoſt unavoidable. They have uſually been ſlightly educated, if educated at all, and are often thruſt, at an early age, into a wicked world, deſtitute of all principles moral and religious. The only leſſon they have learned with effect, is to admire worldly pomp and grandeur, and to think rank and title capable of juſtifying any conduct, however iniquitous or immoral. They idolize the great with abject ſervility, and are inſolent to the middle ranks. They aſſume a ſhare of grandeur from the rank of their maſters, and think themſelves intitled to domineer over their equals, and to ridicule their ſuperiors. Wherever they go, they diffuſe, among the lower orders, a ſpirit of impudence, diſcontent, extravagance, and debauchery, and are uſually and deſervedly eſteemed a nuiſance to a neighbourhood.

Indeed,

Indeed, the profligacy among the ſervants of the great is no trifling evil. Much of the corruption of the common people is certainly cauſed and encreaſed by their example. The following is a caſe too common in the country village. A young man, with all the happy ſimplicity of honeſty and innocence, is engaged, in conſequence of the good character which he bears, in the ſervice of the neighbouring lord. He goes to the metropolis, and ſpends a winter in the low haunts of the loweſt debauchery and drunkenneſs. While his maſter is engaged in the ſcenes of polite amuſement, the poor menial, who waits for him during the tedious watches of the night, ſolaces *himſelf* in the alehouſe or night-cellar, amidſt all that can corrupt by examples of fraud, exceſs, ill language, and every vice which debaſes humanity. His *honeſt* parents, and his brothers and ſiſters, are, in the mean time, enjoying the ſweet ſlumbers procured by labour and temperance.

At the return of ſummer, the poor fellow retires with his maſter into the country. He is finely *dreſſed*, and naturally excites the admiration of the village and his own family. What he ſays comes from him with the authority of an oracle. He conſiders himſelf, indeed, as greatly enlightened, and undertakes to communicate the illumination. In the firſt place, he *ridicules* the ruſticity of his friends and neighbours, and laughs at their aukward dreſs and behaviour. Their patient ſubmiſſion to labour, he calls plodding and ſlavery; their ſobriety and temperance, covetouſneſs and meanneſs; their conjugal affection and regard *to* decency, ignorance of the world; and their religion, ſuperſtition.

He commonly confirms his opinions by alleging the example of his lord. "My lord," ſays he, "I would "have you know, is a great man, a very great man. "He is concerned in governing the nation, making "taxes, and is in great favour both with his prince "and with the people. His patronage is courted, not "only by clergymen, ſuch as our vicar, but by biſhops "and archbiſhops. Therefore you may depend upon "it,

" it, whatever your godly books may teach you to the " contrary, that his manner of acting and thinking " is right, and such as is most conducive to happiness " and enjoyment. Now this is my lord's plan. He " drinks, games, swears, runs in debt, and never " thinks of paying his bill at the shop; though, to do " him justice, if he loses at cards, he always pays " ready money. My lord likewise keeps two or three " mistresses, besides his wife, with whom, indeed, he " never sleeps; but then he lets her go very grand; " and, though two or three of our mercers have broke " since they have served us, he spares no cost in sup- " porting her appearance. My lord never goes to " church, but calls the parsons a pack of hypocrites, " and employs his Sunday either in travelling, or in " cards, dice, drinking, and visiting the ladies. I " usually stand behind my master's chair at dinner, " and attend very closely to all the conversation: so " that I often pick up a great deal of improvement. " And from all I have been able to collect, I am led " to conclude, that what we hear in sermons, and read " in the Bible, is all nonsense; and that the true wis- " dom is to gratify one's senses and passions as much as " one can, get money in any manner, provided it can " be gotten safely, and live jollily. So keep it up, my " lads, and follow mine and my lord's example."

The lads and lasses of the village listen to his lesson with open mouths, and hearts which pant to imitate their kind instructor. Many immediately relinquish the plough and the dairy, and hasten up to London in pursuit of fine clothes, money, and pleasure. They who remain behind, endeavour not to be outdone in drunkenness, gaming, and debauchery, by a lord and his footman; and the village, from being the seat of peace, innocence, industry, and contentment, becomes the sink of sin and misery. Colonies soon emigrate from it to supply the strand and the ballast-lighters.

This is really no exaggerated representation. There are few country gentlemen, who do not consider the summer residence of a rich or titled man of fashion in their neighbourhood as a serious evil, on account of the

the corruption of morals which his corrupted ſervants introduce. There are not many villages, where ſome Mr. John or Mrs. Abigail does not endeavour to turn the country people from the errors of their ways, by teaching them, that virtue is ignorance, and religion ſuperſtition. The example of rank and riches adds a weight to their arguments, which nothing but woeful experience can counterpoiſe. So extenſive has the contagion been conſidered, that I have ſeen it mentioned in advertiſements of houſes on ſale, as a very great recommendation, that there was no nobleman's ſeat within nine miles of the ſituation.

Though riches and titles often render their owners adepts in a new kind of philoſophy, and teach them to ſee the vanity of morality and religion in their own caſe, yet they cannot prevent the want of morality and religion, when it appears in their own ſervants and dependants from being ſeverely felt by themſelves. The rich and the titled do, indeed, in theſe times, often pretend to extraordinary benevolence; becauſe it happens to be the faſhion. Let then their benevolence be rendered conſpicuous among thoſe of their own houſehold, and thoſe of the villages and towns which border on their paternal eſtates. We cannot help diſtruſting their pretenſions to patriotiſm and a love of mankind, to univerſal benevolence and compaſſion, when we ſee them, by the force of their powerful example, unſoofing all the moral and religious reſtraints, which tend to preſerve the innocence and happineſs of individuals and communities; when we ſee them careleſsly diffuſing drunkenneſs, debauchery, diſeaſe, and infidelity among thoſe, whom fortune has rendered the humble miniſters of their luxury and pride.

No. LXXI. ON MUSIC AS AN AMUSEMENT.

MOST of the pleaſurable diverſions have a tendency, when purſued with ardour, not only to relax in a proper degree, but totally to enervate. They indiſpoſe the mind for manly virtue, and introduce a tenderneſs of feeling ill ſuited to encounter the uſual aſperities of common life. But the ſtudy of muſic, under due direction, while it ſweetly ſooths the ſenſe of hearing, touches the ſoul, and elevates and refines its nature. Conducted by philoſophy, it is able to infuſe the nobleſt thoughts, to urge to the moſt animated action, to calm the ruffled ſpirits, and to eradicate every malignant propenſity.

Amid the invectives thrown out againſt the diſſipated manners of the preſent age, its taſte for muſic deſerves applauſe. Even as a ſource of ſenſual pleaſure, it is one of the pureſt and moſt dignified; yet it may be lamented, that it is cultivated merely as a ſenſual pleaſure; becauſe that which titillates the ear, is not always the beſt calculated to affect the heart. Simple muſic, for which the preſent age ſeems to have little reliſh, is capable of producing the moſt violent effects on the ſentiments; and the neglect of it is the cauſe that the mind is often little intereſted in the moſt celebrated compoſitions.

He who has made muſic the ſtudy of his life, and poſſeſſes an ear refined by application to faſtidious delicacy, is pleaſed with the curious productions of the Italian compoſer. But let the admired compoſition be performed in the hearing of another, whoſe natural powers are equally ſenſible, but who has been uſed to the works of Purcell and Handel only, and he will find his ear not greatly delighted, and his heart totally unaffected.

The kind of muſic, however excellent as a piece of art, which penetrates no farther than the ear, produces

duces an effect quite different from what was intended by the original invention. As a pleasure of the sense, though elegant in a high degree, it yet contributes to imbecility. The inartificial music of the drum, at which the connoisseur might be enraged, is better able to produce the genuine effects of music, lively emotions of mind, than the fine modulations of a Fischer's hautboy and a Crosdil's violoncello.

Of what kind is the music that delights those who are stigmatised by the name of vulgar, but who possess all the faculties of perception, in a state undepraved by artificial refinement? Such persons are the unaltered sons of nature; and the sounds which universally please them, are sounds which nature intended should please, and for which she adapted the finely-susceptible sense. The drum, the fife, the trumpet, the harp, the bagpipe, and the dulcimer, are the instruments which inspire the lower ranks with joy and with courage, and which alleviate the sense of the greatest labours and the greatest dangers. If we were to suppose a Giardini condescending to play a fine Italian piece of music at a rural fair, there is little doubt but his audience would be stolen away from him by the itinerant performer on a Scotch bagpipe or the hurdy-gurdy.

There are certain ballads, and certain tunes adapted to them, which are known to almost every individual in a nation, and which please on every repetition. The music, as well as the poetry of these, is simple in the extreme. The Scotch tunes have a sweetness which delights every ear unspoiled by the complex productions of laborious ingenuity, but which the Italian master knows not to intermix in his boasted compositures. And yet, nothing can be more natural and easy than the sweet wild wood-notes of the Highland-swain.

There are also certain psalm tunes, which, with little merit as technical performances, are enabled to excite in the mind a great degree of devotional extasy. Those of the hundredth and the hundredth and fourth psalms, are the most popular music in England; and they are no less adapted to excite a spirit of piety, and elevate

elevate the ſoul to heaven, than to ſooth the ear with their ſimple melody.

Theſe obſervations are adduced with a view to recommend the adoption of a taſte for ſimple muſic, among thoſe who ſtudy muſic merely for the entertainment of a domeſtic circle. It appears to be more pleaſing to the ear in its natural ſtate, than the laboured and complicated productions of the profeſſed modern muſician; and experience abundantly proves, that it powerfully affects the heart and the imagination. If then it were received in thoſe numerous families, where, in the preſent age, muſic forms a conſtant diverſion, its effect on the morals of the people at large would be truly important. It would elevate with piety, warm with generoſity, and enlarge and ennoble, correct and purify every affection. There is ſcarcely any ſentiment which may not be excited, increaſed, diminiſhed, or modified by a piece of muſic, ſimple enough to be ſtrongly expreſſive. Thus powerful as well as ſweet, it is to be wondered at, as well as regretted, that it ſhould be ſuperſeded by a ſpecies of complicated harmony, ingenious indeed, in a high degree, yet poſſeſſing little other claim to attention, but as it affords an elegant amuſement for a vacant hour. Muſic at preſent often forms a conſiderable part of female education; and it is to be lamented, that an accompliſhment, which, when properly regulated, is moſt efficacious in filling the young mind with virtuous and generous ſentiments, ſhould form only innocent paſtime and polite employment.

Paradoxical as it may appear, it is really true, that muſic ſeems of late to be addreſſed to the eye as well as to the ear. Dexterity of execution, the wonderfully expeditious motion of the fingers, the hand, and the arm, cauſe an equal ſhare of applauſe with the tones of the inſtrument. He who can hold his breath the longeſt, is proportionably honoured with the longeſt continuation of plaudits. The ſweeteſt ſhepherd that ever piped on his Doric reed, would be leſs applauded than he who can make his pipe ſqueak for the ſpace of five minutes without reſpiration. The ſimple lyre of Apollo would ſcarcely engage attention, while the finger

finger of a modern was dancing on the ſtrings of a violoncello. To attain to this ſtupendous excellence of rapid execution, requires the unremitted labour of a life; while a much leſs degree of application would enable a performer to raviſh and captivate the heart, if the natural feelings were not ſuperſeded by acquired taſte.

It is often urged as a reaſon for neglecting the ſtudy and performance of muſic, that to excel in it, or to play in ſuch a manner as not to offend a judge, requires a portion of time incompatible with an attention to more valuable acquirements. To arrive at this ſurpriſing expedition, this muſical legerdemain, it is indeed neceſſary to do little elſe than ſcrape and pipe. But a comparatively moderate dexterity is ſufficient to effect all the great purpoſes of muſic, thoſe of moving the paſſions in the cauſe of virtue, and of exciting ſentiments of manly pleaſure. Fortunately, the ſimple muſic, which is to produce theſe deſirable effects, is the moſt eaſily performed. The moſt powerful influence of muſic ever known, is recorded in the volumes of antiquity; but it is certain, that the muſical inſtruments of antiquity were ſimple in ſo great a degree, that it has perplexed the modern muſician to diſcover how they were capable of producing a tolerable harmony. Yet the feats of Timotheus, though aſtoniſhing, are thought by many not to have been fabulous. He, indeed, who looks into the opera-houſe, after reading Dryden's Ode, will be induced, from the vacant countenance and ſleepy eye, to judge that the muſical art of Timotheus may be numbered among the loſt arts in which antiquity excelled, and which the moderns ambitiouſly, yet vainly, imitate.

To produce the full effect of muſic, it is neceſſary that the ſiſter art, which operates in conjunction with it, ſhould not be united by a forced alliance. Good poetry and good muſic, each of which is ſeparately powerful, acquire, by a proper union, an irreſiſtible force over the human heart. Yet every one knows, that many a fine piece of muſic is deformed by the moſt wretched rhymes that were ever tagged by a hungry poetaſter. Songs we have in abundance, written by

authors

authors of acknowledged excellence; and it is surely a want of spirit to adopt, in preference to these, the nonsense which a musician has purchased in Grub-street; to be accompanied by his excellent melody. It is indeed to be wished, that the superior poets of the age would combine with the best composers of music, and do honour to themselves, and to the arts they love, in cementing, by the liberal communication of mutual assistance, so natural and desirable an union as that of music and poetry.

No. LXXII. ON THE BEST METHOD OF EXCITING IN BOYS THE SYMPTOMS OF LITERARY GENIUS.

THAT tender sensibility which always accompanies true genius, often lays open the heart to such early impressions as are very unfavourable to a virtuous and prudential conduct. Many parents have therefore expressed a wish, that their sons might possess a plain understanding, without any of that fine and susceptible delicacy which is supposed to constitute a genius.

But it appears to me, that this glorious gift of heaven ought not to be so lightly esteemed. To be superior to other men in the superior part of man, the mind; to perceive external nature with greater acuteness than others; to possess the powers of memory, reflection, imagination, to a fuller extent, and to be more feelingly alive to all the affections of the heart, what is it but to have been favoured by heaven with a more excellent nature, to have been rendered capable of distinguished happiness, and of communicating good in an effectual and extensive manner to the world at large? Not to wish for such a condition as this, nor to be thankful for it when it has fallen to ourselves or our children, is a degree of ingratitude humiliating to humanity.

And if it be true, that genius is exposed to peculiar dangers at an early age, I would not infer, that genius

is

is not to be desired, but that the moral conduct of him, in whom it appears, should be kept under the restraints of parental authority, with uncommon strictness of discipline and vigilance of observation. It is not sufficient merely to give moral cautions, but actual restraints must be imposed; for, after all the boasts of moral philosophy, the most effectual method of restraining young people from vice, is to watch them circumspectly, to keep them at home, and at a distance from temptation. That susceptibility of temper, which, when unrestrained, leads to vicious habits and indulgencies, will strongly attach itself to all that is laudable and lovely, if care is taken, that nothing but what is truly so be allowed to solicit the attention. Elegant letters will furnish a variety of delightful objects, capable of engrossing both the affections and the imagination, so long as the allurements of the senses are, as much as possible, removed from the view.

Genius then being an endowment most desirable, and not necessarily attended either with misconduct or misfortune, I shall think myself usefully employed in attempting to point out a few methods which may contribute to excite it. The flint must be struck in a proper manner, and with proper materials, before the latent spark can be elicited.

Instead of exercising the understanding only at a very early age, I think, a very considerable share of attention should be paid to the cultivation of the fancy. For this purpose, the most entertaining story-books should be read as an amusement. The more romantic, the better adapted to the purpose. The popular histories of giants and fairies, enchanted castles, and ideal beings of uncouth form, and whatever strongly strikes the imagination, or deeply affects the heart, is calculated to vivify the latent seeds of embryo genius. Many of those little books, which are sold by itinerant pedlars to children and servants, and which are thought too despicable to deserve the attention of the learned, have constituted the mental food of our sublimest writers in the age of infancy. Not only the old romances, but the common historical ballads of rudest composition, have been read with delight by our best poets. The

works

works of Shakeſpeare bear evident marks of that ſpecies of reading in which he took pleaſure. His witches, his magicians, his ghoſts, and all thoſe airy nothings to which he gave a local habitation and a name, owe their origin to the poet's feeding his fancy on the romantic and ſuperſtitious writings of the darker ages. It appears too, that Milton was extenſively acquainted with romances, and that he felt a peculiar pleaſure in their peruſal. The examples of ſuch men powerfully confirm the propriety of that mode of exciting genius which I principally recommend.

But this ſort of books muſt be placed in the hands of children merely as matter of entertainment; and, if they do not take delight in them, they muſt be laid aſide for a more convenient ſeaſon. It would be ridiculous to read them as a taſk, and would indeed fruſtrate the intention; for it is the delight which they afford to the infant fancy, which conſtitutes their principal utility. They are found, for the moſt part, to be particularly adapted to the curious and inexperienced mind of children: they are read with the cloſeſt attention; they enable the ſoul to feel its lively energies expanding to ſtrength and maturity; and they operate on the pregnant mind like a warm vernal ſhower on a fertile field.

It muſt indeed be allowed that, with all their faſcinating power over the young imagination, they ſometimes exhibit nonſenſe and futility. Many parents and inſtructors will therefore object to the peruſal of them. If theſe, however, may be rejected, yet I think it abſolutely neceſſary, that ſome books of ſimilar effect ſhould be ſubſtituted in their place; and I cannot help thinking, that none are better ſuited to the purpoſe than thoſe of Milton and Shakeſpeare. An objector may urge, that a young boy will often be at a loſs to underſtand them. But let not this be regarded. Let him read on, and paſs over what he does not underſtand, without impeding his progreſs. He will of courſe underſtand them better on every ſubſequent reading; and his genius will be called forth much more powerfully, by dwelling on what he underſtands, and receiving a proper impreſſion from it, than

by ſtopping to develope difficulties with the coldneſs of a critic.

Simple, narrative, and pathetic poetry, is indeed ſo pleaſing to the pure and unvitiated minds of boys, that it can ſcarcely fail to excite their portion of genius, if they poſſeſs any; but there are alſo many works in proſe capable of producing the ſame effect. Rouſſeau has recommended Robinſon Cruſoe. I entirely agree with him, on the peculiar propriety of feeding the young mind with a book ſo intereſting, and ſo eaſy of comprehenſion. Don Quixote may be recommended for the ſame purpoſe. Oriental tales, ſuch as abound in the periodical eſſayiſts, are peculiarly proper. Old Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progreſs, though a ſtrange performance, very powerfully affects the fancy, and may be uſed with great advantage, in accompliſhing the purpoſe of exciting genius. The Arabian Nights Entertainments, the Tales of the Genii, and the Death of Abel, though they may not be entirely approved by a mature underſtanding and taſte, are well calculated to kindle a flame in the boſoms of boys; but, perhaps, no book would be found to afford better paſſages for this purpoſe than the Bible, if a little care were taken, by the ſuperintendants of education, to ſelect thoſe parts, which are ſo beautifully diſtinguiſhed for ſimple ſublimity and unaffected pathos.

No. LXXIII. ON THE REASONABLENESS OF THE ANTIQUARIAN TASTE.

THE baneful effects of thoſe prejudices, which the mind forms from an early and wrong aſſociation of ideas, have been often felt and lamented in the ſeveral departments of morals, of ſcience, and of religion. They have been experienced in a ſimilar manner, though indeed with leſs injury to ſociety, in a province, where the want of adequate objects to excite jealouſy and paſſion might be ſuppoſed to preclude their operation in the ſtudies of humanity and polite letters. To the influence of unjuſt prepoſſeſſion, it

must

muſt be attributed, that ſome kinds of literary purſuits, indiſputably innocent at leaſt, ſuch as is the ſtudy of antiquities, have been attacked with all the ſhafts of pointed ridicule.

One circumſtance, which has contributed to extenuate the value of reſearches into antiquity, is a very exalted opinion of the ſcientific attainments of the preſent age. If progreſſive improvement is univerſally, and in every inſtance, the conſequence of progreſſive years, the opinion and the reſult of it might perhaps be well founded. But though it muſt be allowed, that the advancement of valuable ſcience has been diſproportionably rapid within the ſpace of the laſt two or three centuries; though the invention of printing, of the compaſs, and of many auxiliary inſtruments, and the diffuſion of a liberal ſpirit, have facilitated modern enquiries of every kind, and conſequently accumulated a ſum of knowledge, which preceding ages could ſcarcely hope to obtain; yet it muſt be conſidered, that in the long interval of mental darkneſs which preceded theſe inventions, many hiſtorical events muſt have happened, many practices prevailed, many modes of convenience have been adopted, which it may concern mankind to know, but which cannot be recalled but by the labours of the antiquary. The general light enjoyed by the preſent age is ſtrong and diffuſive; but it cannot illuminate theſe diſtant periods, unleſs its beams are concentered upon them. The rays of the ſun are abundantly ſufficient to guide our ſteps on the ſurface of the earth; but he who inveſtigates the ſubterraneous cavern muſt have recourſe to the aſſiſtance of the lamp.

The deep reſearches of our modern ſcholars have ſometimes thrown additional light on ſcriptural ſubjects, and have had no inconſiderable influence in diſſipating the doubts of the ſceptical. The diſcovery and explanation of a medal by a moſt ingenious illuſtrator of antient mythology, have exhibited to the deiſt a very powerful confirmation of the ſcriptural account of the deluge. It is certainly an erroneous judgment which has cenſured the ſtudies of the medalliſt as nugatory. To antient coins, gems, and medals, learning in general is greatly indebted, and hiſtory owes

ſome of its moſt authentic records. All the uſual materials to which writing has been committed are of a periſhable nature, expoſed to irrecoverable deſtruction from a thouſand ſlight accidents, and inevitably doomed to periſh, after a ſhort period, by the corroſion of time. But the inſcription on the faithful metal has been preſerved, without injury from the earlieſt periods of civilization. To ſeem to pay a veneration to ruſt, and to eſtimate the current coin at leſs than the mutilated braſs or copper of a Roman emperor, may appear ridiculous to him, who has not duly conſidered the extenſive utility of theſe acquiſitions; but he who has obſerved light reflected from an apparently contemptible coin, on hiſtory ſacred and profane, will reſpect the laudable though ſingular purſuit of the virtuoſo.

Nor will it be found, that in ſubjects of comparatively leſs importance than the truth of religion, and the authenticity of hiſtorical information, the reſult of the antiquary's labour is deſtitute of utility. He muſt have formed a very inadequate idea of the powers and the energy of the human intellects, who imagines that nothing was produced, even in the darkeſt ages, by the efforts of native ingenuity, worthy the adoption of a more refined period. Not only in ſcience, but in politics and œconomics, in the leſs ſplendid arts, which adminiſter to convenience and enjoyment, much information may be derived, by careful ſearch, from times which have been in general neglected, as affording nothing to repay the labour of attention. This at leaſt is certain, that whatever they afford of real uſe can only be elicited from the embarraſſment in which it is entangled by the ſagacious antiquary. The ignorance of the ages in queſtion neceſſarily occaſioned a paucity of written memorials. Few and imperfect as theſe have been, nothing but unwearied perſeverance, joined to great penetration, could draw them from their obſcure repoſitories, and give them a ſufficient degree of perſpicuity. It is happy for mankind, that the love of antiquities is a paſſion which operates with no inconſiderable violence. Nothing leſs could ſtimulate the laborious ſtudent to ſuch long and painful inveſtigations,

inveſtigations, as are often neceſſary to procure ſatisfactory information. He, however, who has perſeverance enough to ſurmount all difficulties, which oppoſe his progreſs in a dark and rugged path, ought to be vindicated from the cenſures of raillery, however futile his diſcovery may ſometimes appear to a ſuperficial obſerver. Many of our moſt excellent principles in the laws of England, many of our envied political inſtitutions owe their origin to feudal times; to thoſe times which the claſſical ſcholar is tempted to overlook, as preſenting little to exerciſe and reward ingenuity. But it may reaſonably be concluded, that they who could deviſe legal and civil modes of judging and acting, avowedly worthy the imitation of the moſt improved ages, were often equally ſucceſsful in their other inventions. In developing theſe, the antiquary ſometimes finds, and perhaps dwells upon, leſs important matters, which are only entertaining; but he is no more to be condemned than the voyager, who ſtops to contemplate the curioſities which occur in his paſſage, yet, at the ſame time, forgets not the place or object of his deſtination.

It has been miſtakenly ſuppoſed, that the ſtudies of the antiquary are deſtitute of entertainment. To the lover of them, they unqueſtionably have afforded pleaſure, even under the moſt diſadvantageous circumſtances; but, in the preſent age, they have alſo entered on a department, which engages the attention of the general ſcholar, and the man of taſte and polite learning. They have been employed in recovering, from antient manuſcripts and ſcarce books, the poetry of our forefathers; and he who is moſt averſe from the more dry and recondite reſearches, muſt acknowledge his obligations to thoſe who have judiciouſly compiled the reliques of our antient poetry.

Obvious as appears the utility of enquiring into the obſcure ſcenes of remote antiquity, it has given riſe to ſarcaſm and ridicule. Circumſtances, it muſt be confeſſed, have ſometimes ariſen, which ſeem to juſtify ſome degree of raillery. For it is true that, in the courſe of various and profound reſearches, many collateral diſcoveries will be made, whoſe ſole utility conſiſts

ſiſts in the gratification of curioſity. A common uteſill, of little dignity or uſe, has ſometimes exerciſed the conjectural ingenuity of the antiquary, to the diverſion of thoſe who have not imbibed a congenial ſpirit. But however contemptible the diſcovery of trifling objects may have been, when conſidered in itſelf, it has acquired a degree of value by the general and probable conſequences. It has often led to objects of real importance, by ſuggeſting hints, which might never have occurred, had not the enquiry been commenced and proſecuted with vigour. And the maxim eſtabliſhed in a leſs liberal purſuit, that the ſmalleſt gains are not to be neglected by him who endeavours to amaſs a fortune, muſt be ſteadily attended to in a ſucceſsful purſuit of knowledge.

And, indeed, allowing that many of the reſults of antiquarian ſagacity are not of high importance, yet will not this conceſſion tend to render the ſtudy of antiquities a contemptible employment. It is a fruitful ſource of the pleaſures of imagination. That lively faculty of the human mind is greatly delighted with the effort it makes in returning back to paſt ages, in being intimately converſant with manners and characters totally different from the preſent, in bringing back to view ſcenes that have long vaniſhed, and tracing the progreſs of human improvements from their embryo ſtate to their comparative maturity.

That which affords this ſpecies and degree of pleaſure is highly worthy of cultivation. For it may with juſtice be aſſerted, that they who judge ſcarcely any thing worthy of ſerious purſuit which is not attended with evident and palpable profit, are too ſevere in their reſtrictions. Their conceptions are certainly too limited when they circumſcribe advantage within the bounds of perſonal, or even public emolument. Every intellectual effort, which calls off the attention from leſs refined avocations; every liberal ſtudy, which furniſhes an innocent pleaſure, is uſeful, as it is favourable to virtue, and adds to the number of ſafe indulgences.

No. LXXIV. OBJECTIONS TO THE STUDY OF ANTIQUITIES WHEN IMPROPERLY PURSUED.

TO arraign any part of thoſe ſtudies, which exerciſe the talents of the liberal and ingenious, is by no means a deſirable province. Under certain circumſtances, and with due reſtrictions, they are all laudable in a high degree. But ſince excellence admits gradations, and ſince even eſtimable qualities and virtuous exertions, are rendered blameable by exceſs, it becomes expedient to point out the line which ſeparates fictitious from real utility, and to reſcind thoſe redundancies, which, like a morbid excreſcence on a beautiful body, ſuperinduce deformity on grace, and give an alloy to intrinſic value. Such an attempt, inſtead of extenuating, will tend to enhance the worth of thoſe things which are really valuable.

Theſe ideas will perhaps juſtify us in reviewing the objections which may be made to the purſuits of the antiquary. Though theſe purſuits are unqueſtionably too reſpectable to be condemned in general, yet their perverſion and their exceſs afford ample ſcope for liberal cenſure.

That the ſtudies of the antiquary have afforded matter for comic ridicule is not to be wondered at, when it is conſidered, with how ſerious an air he has uſually deſcanted on trifling ſubjects. An implement, originally contemptible, and rendered ſtill more worthleſs by decay, no ſooner falls into the hands of the admirer of ancient remains, than it excites a degree of admiration approaching to idolatry, and furniſhes matter for a profound diſſertation. Many fanciful conjectures are formed, a thouſand collateral hints ſuggeſted, and a deciſive ſentence at laſt pronounced, with all the formal proceſs of dictatorial authority. After all the learning diſplayed, and ſagacity exerted, it not unuſually happens,

has done discredit to the study of antiquities. He has pursued trifles with an ardour justifiable only in important business, and consumed time and ingenuity in effecting no adequate purpose. By the discerning part of mankind, he will be classed in the same rank with the admirer of a trinket, the hunter of a butterfly, the cultivator of a flower, and the connoisseur in mosses. Such pursuits we acknowledge to be harmless, and the praise usually terminates in that single epithet. He who venerates a contemptible relique is actuated with a degree of the pilgrim's superstition, less pernicious indeed in its effects, but scarcely less absurd in its principle.

But let not the justice of liberal and candid censure be disgraced by indiscriminate and general invective. From the researches of those who have brought to light the antiquities of ancient Greece and Rome, from our own Potter and a Kennet, our scholastic studies derive daily assistance. It is easy to enumerate the names of many, who have very successfully laboured in this department. Our own country can display a long list of illustrious antiquaries, who have judiciously trodden in the footsteps of a Camden, a Leland, and a Hearne. It must at the same time be lamented, that it can exhibit a great number, who, by perverting the pursuit, have rendered it ridiculous.

Raillery and censure are perhaps more frequently misplaced and ill-directed than applause. They have often been carried to excess, and pointed at wrong objects, when they have chosen the study of antiquities for the display of their poignancy. The attack should only be levelled at abuses and perversion. The correction of these will restore its proper dignity to the study of antiquities, and cause the shafts of ridicule, which have been successfully thrown at it, to recoil on the aggressors. The result will be, that the attention, which is due to real excellence and experienced utility, will cease to be paid to objects which possess only, an imaginary value, derived from an equivocal or supposititious source, the ideal merit of a long duration.

No. LXXV. ON THE NECESSITY OF AN ATTENTION TO THINGS AS WELL AS BOOKS, EXEMPLIFIED IN THE INSTANCE OF A FELLOW OF A COLLEGE. IN A LETTER.

SIR,

AFTER thirty years conſtant reſidence at the univerſity, I thought myſelf ſupremely happy, when I was at laſt preſented by my college to a living worth two hundred a year. During ſo long a period, I had treaſured up many ideas for the regulation of my future conduct, and congratulated myſelf, that my theory was now to be reduced to practice.

I found my parſonage houſe a large antiquated building, in a delightful ſituation, and capable of very great improvement. I had been uſed to ſee every thing around me in the beſt order, and had acquired a love of external decency in all the articles of dreſs and habitation. I ſent therefore without heſitation for the builder, and gave him an unlimited order to repair every thing in a ſtyle of becoming elegance. The work was done entirely to my mind, and I had nothing to find fault with but the bill, which came to three times the ſum mentioned in the eſtimate, and almoſt exhauſted the little ſavings of a collegiate life.

My garden was laid out in gravel walks interſecting each other at right angles, and its only ornaments were a few yew-trees clipped into peacocks. I ordered every tree and plant to be rooted up, the walks to be turned to ſerpentine, and the whole to be planted with the moſt beautiful ſhrubs. A cloſe of about an acre at the bottom lay ſo contiguous, that it tempted me to add it to the garden. No labour or ingenuity was ſpared, and I own I felt a little ſatisfaction in a conſciouſneſs of poſſeſſing the grounds about me in a taſte

ſuperior

ſuperior to the Eſquire himſelf. In the ardour of reformation it did not occur, that I was not only expending more than I could afford, but involving myſelf in a neceſſity of keeping an additional and ſkilful ſervant, conſtantly to ſuperintend my improvements. I had neglected utility for ornaments, and had planted the fir and the laurel inſtead of the fruit-tree and the pot-herb. After incurring ſome ridicule of the neighbourhood, I was obliged to change my ſhrubbery to a cabbage-garden, and to reſume my cloſe as paſture-ground for my poney.

I no ſooner ſettled, than it was ſuggeſted to me, by an attorney who wanted buſineſs, that my living was worth much more than I ſhould receive, and that I owed it to myſelf and ſucceſſors to receive the tythes in kind. I entered on the project with great zeal, built a barn, and bought a cart; but in a meeting of farmers, not one of whom could read or write his own name, I was talked out of the ſcheme, and prevailed on to let my living for life, two-thirds under its real value.

I had ever entertained exalted ideas of the utility and pleaſure of old Engliſh hoſpitality, and had promiſed myſelf a plentiful table whenever I ſhould become maſter of a houſe. The beſt of wines, the beſt of proviſions were brought to it, and theſe were allurements that prevented the poſſibility of its being deſerted. The neighbouring gentlemen liked both my port and ale, and I was ſo happy as to give them ſatisfaction with my Madeira; a circumſtance which, though it pleaſed them and me at the time, was a ſubject of ſome uneaſineſs to my wine-merchant, who found that a pipe a year was a great tax on an annual income of two hundred pounds.

The baker's, butcher's, and maltſter's bills were a kind of manuſcripts never met with in the Bodleian, and to the peruſal of which I was quite unuſed. I had much rather have collated a dozen Greek copies, than have caſt up a ſum conſiſting of a dozen articles. This diſinclination ſoon introduced a perplexity in my accounts, which I was too indolent to unravel, till at laſt an accumulation of debt required a degree of œconomy to which my ſpirit could not without difficulty ſubmit.

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I had been uſed for thirty years to ſcarcely any interruption, ſave the tinkling of the chapel and the dinner bell, and could not help being diſguſted at the noiſe of ſervants, and the buſtle of a family. Amid the din which was ſeldom interrupted, how often did I wiſh myſelf tranſported to the bliſsful region of the common room fire-ſide! Delightful retreat, where never female ſhewed her head ſince the days of the founder!

There was one circumſtance attending my new ſituation, which, though only an imaginary evil, gave me at firſt a ſenſible mortification. As a ſenior fellow, I was a little monarch within the verge of my college. The ſtatutes had required, that perſons of the lower degrees ſhould paſs before me, nay, ſtand in the quadrangle whenever I was preſent, with heads uncovered. From this general obeiſance, and from many other circumſtances, I had been led to conceive myſelf a perſon of great importance. I was ſo, indeed, in the circumſcribed limits of my ſociety. But the misfortune was, that I could not eaſily free myſelf from the conſciouſneſs of it when no longer a member, and expected a ſimilar degree of deference from all I met, which cannot be paid in the buſy world without inconvenience.

Though by no means remarkable for diffidence at college, I felt myſelf aukward and uneaſy, when admitted into the company of thoſe who were ſtyled the polite. I had thought and read upon moſt ſubjects, yet I found my remarks leſs attended to in a faſhionable circle than thoſe of the confeſſedly illiterate. Matter I poſſeſſed; but the manner was wanting. That eaſy kind of trifling, which pleaſes without fatiguing the attention of the ſuperficial, was not among my academical acquirements. Thus, with a great inclination, and ſome ability to join in general converſation and intercourſe, I was almoſt reduced to a ſtate of ſolitude, and wiſhed in vain for the frank and good-natured aſſociates of the common room.

Upon the whole, my condition is far leſs happy and leſs reſpectable, than I had reaſon to expect. I have diſcovered, when it is almoſt too late, that I had confined my views within too narrow limits, by attending only to the affairs of a college. I have learned the neceſſity

neceſſity of ſtudying things with all the attention paid to an abſtruſe ſcience; and will recommend it to thoſe, whoſe proſpects in life are ſimilar to mine, to devote ſome part of their time to the conſideration of common affairs; of a few mechanic arts, ſuch as concern building, repairing, gardening; of agriculture, and of the manners of huſbandmen, with whom, in the buſineſs of tythes, they will be obliged to negotiate. They will thus not only ſpend the cloſe of their lives with more pleaſure to themſelves, but will more effectually accompliſh the ends of the clerical profeſſion.

Of the imprudence of a contrary conduct, I ſtand a melancholy inſtance. I am left alone, at a time when the amuſement of companions is moſt wanted to help out the laſt ſtage in the journey of life. I am both deſerted and defrauded. I remain in a total ignorance of the world, at a period when others are become wiſe by experience; and I am involved in the miſtakes of youth, without its amiable qualities to palliate them.

No. LXXVI. ON THE INFLUENCE OF FASHION.

THEY who are exempted by their elevated condition from the confinement of commercial and profeſſional life, involve themſelves in voluntary ſlavery by engaging in the ſervice of the tyrant Faſhion. They are compelled to abſtain from actions in themſelves pleaſing and innocent, however ſtrong their inclination to them, becauſe the caprice of ſome diſtinguiſhed character has prohibited them by his example. Like the dulleſt of animals, they are driven round the ſame circle, from which once to deviate would ſubject them to an appellation of all others the moſt formidable. To be called profligate, extravagant, intemperate, or even wicked, might be tolerated with patience; but who could bear to live with the epithet of ungenteel?

People of faſhion, once admitted to this honourable title, form a little world of their own, and learn to look

look down upon all others as beings of a subordinate nature. It is then a natural question, In what does this superiority consist? It arises not from learning, for the most illiterate claim it, and are indulged in the claim; it arises not from virtue, for the most vicious are not excluded. Wealth, beauty, birth, and elegance, are not the only qualifications for it, because many enjoy it who have no just pretensions to either, and many are excluded who possess them all. It seems to be a combination of numbers, under two or three leaders in high life, who agree to imitate each other, and to maintain, by the majority of voices, and the effrontery of pride, that all they do is proper, and all they say is sensible; that their dress is becoming, their manners polite, their houses tasteful, their furniture, their carriages, all that appertains to them, the very quintessence of real beauty. Those who come not within the pale of their jurisdiction, they condemn with papal authority to perpetual insignificance. They stigmatise them by wholesale, as people whom nobody knows, as the scum of the earth, as born only to minister to their pride, and to supply the wants of their luxury.

Groundless are the pretensions of this confederacy, no pains are avoided to become an adopted member. For this, the stripling squanders his patrimony, and destroys his constitution. For this, the virgin bloom of innocence and beauty is withered at the vigils of the card-table. For this, the loss of integrity, and public infamy, are willingly incurred; and it is agreed by many, that it were better to go out of the world, than to live in it and be unfashionable.

If this distinction is really valuable, and if the happiness or misery of life depends upon obtaining or losing it, then are the thousands who walk the private path of life, objects of the sincerest pity. Some consolation must be devised for the greater part of the community who have never breathed the atmosphere of St. James's, nor embarrassed their fortunes, nor ruined their health, in pursuit of this glorious elevation. Perhaps, on an impartial review it will appear, that these are really possessed

poſſeſſed of that happineſs which vanity would arrogate to itſelf, and yet only ſeems to obtain.

The middle ranks of mankind are the moſt virtuous, the beſt accompliſhed, and the moſt capable of enjoying the pleaſures and advantages which fall to the lot of human nature. It is not the leaſt of theſe, that they are free from the neceſſity of attending to thoſe formalities, which engroſs the attention and waſte the time of the higher claſſes, without any adequate return of ſolid ſatisfaction. Horace, who was far leſs illuſtrious by his birth and ſtation, than by his elegance of manners, was wont to congratulate himſelf, that he could ride on a little mule to the remoteſt town of Italy without ridicule or moleſtation; while his patrons could hardly move a ſtep, but with the unwieldy pomp of an equipage and retinue. The ſingle article of dreſs, which, when ſplendid, requires the labour and attention of many hours, becomes a wretched taſk to thoſe who wiſh to employ their time with honour, with improvement, with pleaſure, and the poſſibility of a ſatisfactory retroſpection.

Viſits of form, of which every one complains, yet to which every one in ſome meaſure ſubmits, are abſolutely neceſſary to keep up the union of the faſhionable confederacy. The more numerous, the more honourable. To be permitted to ſpend five minutes, or to leave a card at the houſes of half the inhabitants of the politer ſtreets, is a felicity which compenſates all the trouble of attendance and tedious preparation. To behold a train of coaches, ſome perhaps with coronets on their ſides, crowding to their door; to hear the fulminations of a ſkilful footman, are joys of which the inhabitants of a rural retreat have little conception, but which delightfully affect the fine feelings of thoſe who are made of purer clay, and honoured with the name of faſhionable.

From this ſevere perſecution, the man who aſpires not at ſuch honours is happily free. He viſits his friend and neighbour, becauſe he feels friendly ſentiments for him, and is received with cordiality. The intervals of company he can devote to ſtudy, and to the purſuit

ſuit of buſineſs and amuſement; for his communications with his friends require not all the long and preparatory trouble of faſhionable formality. In the unreſerved pleaſures of converſation, he looks with reciprocal pity on the clubs in St. James's-ſtreet, nor envies thoſe who knock at an hundred doors in an evening, and who poſſeſs the glorious privilege of ſitting half an hour in the company of thoſe, whoſe profeſſion ſupplies the place of ſincerity.

The effects of faſhion conſtitute, in the moral world, very wonderful phænomena. Faſhion can transform deformity to beauty, and beauty to deformity. When we view the dreſſes in a picture-gallery, we are tempted to ridicule the ſhocking taſte of our grandfathers and grandmothers; and yet there is not the leaſt doubt, but that they appeared beautiful and becoming when they were worn, and that the garb of the ſpectator, who now cenſures them, would have been then equally ridiculous. During the ſhort period of a life, the fluctuations of taſte are ſtrikingly remarkable. A ſmall buckle or a large buckle, a ſhort coat or a long coat, a high or low head-dreſs, appear in their turns, in the courſe of only a few years, laughably abſurd. Manners, books, poetry, painting, building, gardening, undergo a ſimilar alteration. The prevailing taſte is at the time ſuppoſed to be the perfect taſte; a few years paſs, and it is exploded as monſtrous; a new one is adopted; that alſo is ſoon deſpiſed, and the old one, in the capricious viciſſitudes of the innovating ſpirit, is once more revived, to repeat its revolution.

There is certainly a ſtandard of rectitude in manners, decorum, and taſte; but it is more eaſily diſcovered than preſerved. The vanity of the great and opulent will ever be affecting new modes, in order to increaſe that notice to which it thinks itſelf entitled. The lower ranks will imitate them as ſoon as they have diſcovered the innovation. Whether right or wrong, beautiful or deformed, in the eſſential nature of things, is of little moment. The pattern is ſet by a ſuperior, and authority will at any time countenance abſurdity. A hat, a coat, a ſhoe deemed fit to be worn only by a great grandſire, is no ſooner put on by a dictator of faſhions,

fashions, than it becomes graceful in the extreme, and is generally adopted from the first lord of the treasury to the apprentice in Houndsditch.

It must be allowed, indeed, that while Fashion exerts her arbitrary power in matters which tend not to the corruption of morals, or of taste in the fine arts, she may be suffered to rule without limitation. But the misfortune is, that, like other potentates, she will encroach on provinces where her jurisdiction is usurped. The variations she is continually introducing in dress, are of service in promoting commerce. The whims of the rich feed the poor. The variety and the restlessness caused by the changes in the modes of external embellishment, contribute to please and employ those whose wealth and personal insignificance prevent them from finding more manly objects and more rational entertainment. But when the same caprice, which gives law to the wardrobe, extends itself to the library; when the legislator of an assembly dictates in the schools, regulates religion, and directs education, it is time that reason should vindicate her rights against the encroachments of folly.

Yet so fascinating is the influence of general example, that they who possess reason in its most improved state, are known to follow fashion with blind obedience. The scholar and the philosopher is hurried away with the rapidity of the torrent. To stand singular, is to present a mark for the shafts of scorn and malevolence. For the sake of ease, therefore, men are induced to join the throng, which they must resist without success, but not without receiving injury in the conflict. Compliance is thought wisdom, where opposition is inefficacious.

With respect to the distinction claimed by people of fashion, it is certain, that they who are elevated by station, fortune, and a correspondent education, are often distinguished by a peculiar elegance of manners resulting from their improvements. But this ought not to inspire pride, or teach them to separate from the rest of mankind. It should give them a spirit of benevolence, and lead them to promote the happiness of others, in return for the bountiful goodness of Providence in bestowing on them superior advantages, without any peculiar

culiar merit of their own. They ſhould endeavour to convince themſelves, that the warmeſt philanthropiſt is the trueſt gentleman, and that the moſt becoming faſhion is to do all the good they can to individuals and to ſociety.

No. LXXVII. ON SOME PARTS OF THE DISCIPLINE IN OUR ENGLISH UNIVERSITIES.

OUR Engliſh univerſities are held in high eſteem among foreigners; and, indeed, conſidering the number of great men, who have received a part of their education in them, and their opulent eſtabliſhments of colleges and profeſſorſhips, they are really reſpectable. I have therefore been the more diſpoſed to lament, that the public exerciſes ſhould be ſo futile and abſurd, as to deſerve not only the ſeverity of cenſure, but the utmoſt poignancy of ridicule.

Reverence, it has been juſtly remarked, is always encreaſed by the diſtance of the object. The world at large, who hear of colleges like palaces devoted to learning, of princely eſtates bequeathed for the ſupport of profeſſors, of public libraries and ſchools for every ſcience, are diſpoſed to view the conſecrated place in which they abound with peculiar veneration. Accidental viſitors alſo, who behold the ſuperb dining halls, the painted chapels, the luxurious common rooms, the elegant chambers, and the race of mortals, in a peculiar dreſs, ſtrutting through the ſtreets with a ſolemn air of importance; when they ſee all the doctors, both the proctors, with all the heads of colleges and halls, in ſolemn proceſſion, with their velvet ſleeves, ſcarlet gowns, hoods, black, red, and purple—cannot but be ſtruck with the appearance, and are naturally led to conclude, that here, at length, wiſdom, ſcience, learning, and whatever elſe is praiſeworthy, for ever flouriſh and abound.

Without entering into an invidious and particular examination of the ſubject, we may curſorily obſerve, that

that after all this pompous oftentation, and this profuſe expence, the public has not, of late at leaſt, been indebted for the greateſt improvements in ſcience and learning, to all the doctors, both the proctors, nor to all the heads of colleges and halls laid together. That populous univerſity, London, and that region of literary labour, Scotland, have ſeized every palm of literary honour, and left the ſons of Oxford and Cambridge to enjoy ſubſtantial comforts, in the ſmoke of the common or combination room. The burſar's books are the only manuſcripts of any value produced in many colleges; and the ſweets of penſions, exhibitions, fines, fellowſhips, and petty offices, the chief objects of academical purſuit.

If I were to enter into the many laughable abſurdities of collegiate life and univerſity inſtitutions, as they now ſtand, I ſhould exceed the limits of my paper. It is my attention at preſent only to acquaint the public with the exerciſes, which one celebrated ſeat of the Muſes requires, of thoſe who ſeek the envied honour of a Maſter of Arts degree. I ſpeak not from diſpleaſure or reſentment; but voluntarily incur the odium of many perſons attached by intereſt and connections to the univerſities, with no other motive than the deſire of removing the diſgrace of thoſe noble eſtabliſhments, by expoſing the futility of the exerciſes to public animadverſion.

The youth, whoſe heart pants for the honour of a Batchelor of Arts degree, muſt wait patiently till near four years have revolved. But this time is not to be ſpent idly. No; he is obliged, during this period, once to oppoſe and once to reſpond, in diſputations held in the public ſchools—a formidable ſound, and a dreadful idea; but, on cloſer attention, the fear will vaniſh, and contempt ſupply its place.

This oppoſing and reſponding is termed, in the cant of the place, *doing generals*. Two boys, or men, as they call themſelves, agree to *do generals* together. The firſt ſtep in this mighty work is to procure arguments. Theſe are always handed down, from generation to generation, on long ſlips of paper, and conſiſt of fooliſh ſyllogiſms on fooliſh ſubjects, of the formation or the ſignification of which, the reſpondent and

opponent

opponent ſeldom know more than an infant in ſwaddling cloaths. The next ſtep is to go for a *liceat* to one of the petty officers, called the Regent-Maſter of the Schools, who ſubſcribes his name to the queſtions, and receives ſix-pence as his fee. When the important day arrives, the two doubty diſputants go into a large duſty room, full of dirt and cobwebs, with walls and wainſcot decorated with the names of former diſputants, who, to divert the tedious hours, cut out their names with their penknives, or wrote verſes with a pencil. Here they ſit in mean deſks, oppoſite to each other, from one o'clock till three. Not once in a hundred times does any officer enter; and, if he does, he hears one ſyllogiſm or two, and then makes a bow, and departs, as he came and remained, in ſolemn ſilence. The diſputants then return to the amuſement of cutting the deſks, carving their names, or reading Sterne's Sentimental Journey, or ſome other edifying novel. When this exerciſe is duly performed by both parties, they have a right to the title and inſignia of *Sophs*; but not before they have been formally *created* by one of the regent-maſters, before whom they kneel, while he lays a volume of Ariſtotle's works on their heads, and puts on a hood, a piece of black crape, hanging from their necks, and down to their heels; which crape, it is expreſsly ordained by a ſtatute in this caſe made and provided, ſhall be plain, and unadorned either with wool or with fur.

And this work done, a great progreſs is made towards the wiſhed-for honour of a bachelor's degree. There remain only one or two trifling forms, and another diſputation almoſt exactly ſimilar to *doing generals*, but called *anſwering under batchelor*, previous to the awful examination.

Every candidate is obliged to be examined in the whole circle of the ſciences by three maſters of arts, *of his own choice*. The examination is to be held in one of the public ſchools, and to continue from nine o'clock till eleven. The maſters take a moſt ſolemn oath, that they will examine properly and impartially. Dreadful as all this appears, there is always found to be more of appearance in it than reality; for the greateſt dunce

dunce uſually gets his *teſtimonium* ſigned with as much eaſe and credit as the fineſt genius. The manner of proceeding is as follows: The poor young man to be examined in the ſciences often knows no more of them than his bedmaker, and the maſters who examine are ſometimes equally unacquainted with ſuch myſteries. But *ſchemes*, as they are called, or little books, containing forty or fifty queſtions on each ſcience, are handed down, from age to age, from one to another. The candidate to be examined employs three or four days in learning theſe by heart, and the examiners, having done the ſame before him when they were examined, know what queſtions to aſk, and ſo all goes on ſmoothly. When the candidate has diſplayed his univerſal knowledge of the ſciences, he is to diſplay his ſkill in philology. One of the maſters, therefore, deſires him to conſtrue a paſſage in ſome Greek or Latin claſſic, which he does with no interruption, juſt as he pleaſes, and as well as he can. The ſtatutes next require, that he ſhould tranſlate familiar Engliſh phraſes into Latin. And now is the time when the maſters ſhew their wit and jocularity. Droll queſtions are put on any ſubject, and the puzzled candidate furniſhes diverſion by his aukward embarraſſment. I have known the queſtions on this occaſion to conſiſt of an enquiry into the pedigree of a race-horſe. And it is a common queſtion, after aſking what is the *ſummum bonum* of various ſects of philoſophers, to aſk what is the *ſummum bonum*, or chief good, among Oxonians; to which the anſwer is ſuch as Mimnermus would give. This familiarity, however, only takes place when the examiners are pot-companions of the candidate, which indeed is uſually the caſe; for it is reckoned good management to get acquainted with two or three jolly young maſters of arts, and ſupply them well with port, previouſly to the examination. If the vice-chancellor and proctors happen to enter the ſchool, a very uncommon event, then a little ſolemnity is put on, very much to the confuſion of the maſters, as well as of the boy, who is ſitting in the little box oppoſite to them. As neither the officer, nor any one elſe, uſually enters the room (for it is reckoned very *ungenteel*), the examiners

and

and the candidates often converſe on the laſt drinking-bout, or on horſes, or read the newſpaper, or a novel, or divert themſelves as well as they can in any manner, till the clock ſtrikes eleven, when all parties deſcend, and the *teſtimonium* is ſigned by the maſters. With this *teſtimonium* in his poſſeſſion, the candidate is ſure of ſucceſs. The day in which the honour is to be conferred arrives; he appears in the Convocation houſe, he takes an abundance of oaths, pays a ſum of money in fees, and, after kneeling down before the vice-chancellor, and whiſpering a lie, riſes up a Bachelor of Arts.

And now, if he aſpires at higher honours (and what emulous ſpirit can ſit down without aſpiring at them?) new labours and new difficulties are to be encountered during the ſpace of three years. He muſt *determine* in Lent, he muſt *do quodlibets*, he muſt *do auſtins*, he muſt declaim twice, he muſt read ſix ſolemn lectures, and he muſt be again examined in the ſciences, before he can be promoted to the degree of Maſter of Arts.

None but the initiated can know what *determining*, *doing quodlibets*, and *doing auſtins* mean. I have not room to enter into a minute deſcription of ſuch contemptible *minutiæ*. Let it be ſufficient to ſay, that theſe exerciſes conſiſt of diſputations, and the diſputations of ſyllogiſms, procured and uttered nearly in the ſame places, time, and manner, as we have already ſeen them in *doing generals*. There is, however, a great deal of trouble in little formalities, ſuch as procuring ſix-penny liceats, ſticking up the names on the walls, ſitting in large empty rooms by yourſelf, or with ſome poor wight as ill employed as yourſelf, without any thing to ſay or do, wearing hoods, and a little piece of lambſkin with the wool on it, and a variety of other particulars too tedious and too trifling to enumerate.

The declamations would be an uſeful exerciſe, if it were not always performed in a careleſs and evaſive manner. The lectures are always called *Wall* Lectures, becauſe the lecturer has no other audience but the walls. Indeed, he uſually ſteals a ſheet or two of Latin out of ſome old book, no matter on what ſubject, though it ought to be on natural philoſophy.

Theſe

These he keeps in his pocket, in order to take them out and read away, if a proctor should come in; but, otherwise, he sits by himself, and solaces himself with a book, not from the Bodleian but the circulating library.

The examination is performed exactly in the same manner as before described; and, though represented as very formidable, is such an one as a boy from a good school just entered, might go through as well as after a seven years residence. Few however reside; for the majority are what are called *term-trotters*, that is, persons who only keep the terms for form-sake, or spend six or eight weeks in a year in the university, to qualify them for degrees, according to the letter of the statutes.

After all these important exercises and trials, and after again taking oaths by wholesale, and paying the fees, the academic is honoured with a Master's degree, and issues out into the world with this undeniable passport to carry him through it with credit.

Exercises of a nature equally silly and obsolete, are performed, in a similar manner, for the other degrees; but I have neither time nor patience to enter into the detail.

And now I seriously repeat, that what I have said proceeds from no other motive, than a wish to see the glory of the universities unsullied by the disgrace of requiring, with ridiculous solemnity, a set of childish and useless exercises. They raise no emulation, they confer no honour, they promote no improvement. They give a great deal of trouble, they waste much time, and they render the university contemptible to its own members. I have the honour, such as it is, to be a member of the university of Oxford, and a master of arts in it. I know the advantages of the place; but I also know its more numerous and weighty disadvantages: and the confidence the public has already placed in me, makes it a duty to inform them of every thing, in which the general state of morals and literature is greatly concerned. I have done this duty; nor shall I regard the displeasure of all the doctors, both the proctors, nor of all the heads of colleges and halls, with their respective societies.

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"As to the imprudence of this undertaking," to uſe the words of an able but unfortunate writer, "I con-"feſs it to be ſuch, and that I have all along proceeded "without a ſingle view to my own intereſt, without any "promiſe or expectation of the ſmalleſt reward, even "that of being preſented to a Doctor's degree by the "univerſity, in return for all my induſtry, and the pains "which I have taken in its behalf.

"The worldly wiſe, and the prudent of this gene-"ration, conſider things only as they reſpect their tem-"poral intereſt and advantage, without any regard to "right or wrong, truth or falſehood, any further than "they conduce to their corrupt purpoſes and ſelfiſh "aims. But it is the part of a ſcholar and an honeſt "man to conſider things intrinſecally, and to make "truth, reaſon, and equity, the ſtandards of all his de-"terminations."

No. LXXVIII. ON THE FEAR OF GROWING OLD.

AMONG the various follies, by which we encreaſe the natural and unavoidable miſeries of life, is the dread of approaching age. The ſight of a grey hair has often cauſed a ſeverer pang than the loſs of a child or a huſband. After a certain age, every returning birth-day is ſaluted with ſilent ſorrow, and we conceal the number of our years with as much ſolicitude as the conſciouſneſs of an atrocious crime.

This weakneſs ariſes, in great meaſure, from a defective education. They who have never been taught to conſider any thing valuable but youth, beauty, and diſſipating pleaſure, will naturally feel themſelves reduced to a ſtate of deſpondency, when they behold all, for which life appears worth poſſeſſing, on the eve of departure. That middle age, at which all the powers of the mind and body are in complete perfection, is loathed as if it were the age of decrepitude. The boundaries of life, by nature ſufficiently circumſcribed, are ſtill farther contracted by the empty votary of faſhion, and from threeſcore and ten it ſhrinks to thirty.

It has been currently reported, that many fashionable beauties have expressed a devout wish, that they might not survive their thirtieth birth-day. To sink in the horizon of the gay world, and to see other suns soaring in all the glorious majesty of youth and beauty, was more than they imagined their delicate natures could possibly sustain.

But as life is sweet, and death not always exorable, they and their many imitators will probably be inclined to live on, even when they are arrived at the formidable age of thrice ten years. It will then be but common charity to endeavour to convince them, that there are methods, which may render the long and dismal period which is to follow, not only comfortable to themselves, but agreeable to others. They will not any longer be under the necessity of dressing at sixty in the garb of sixteen, nor of painting and patching a shrivelled skin, nor of spending that time at the looking-glass, which should be devoted to the mirrour and the beauty of holiness.

For the enjoyment of the space from thirty to threescore, it will be necessary to have laid in a stock of good humour. But the temper must be cultivated at an early age, in order to be cultivated with success. The years from eight to eighteen must not be exclusively devoted to external ornament, and the arts of catching admiration. Many efforts must be made during this period to overcome spite, envy, peevishness, stubbornness, sullenness, and all those ugly qualities, which, though they may lie dormant while youth and beauty secure submission, will afterwards break out in all the fulness of their horrors, when flattery is silent, and admiration no more. But good humour will rise to supply the charms of departed beauty; and good sense, properly improved, will leave no part of life without the means of pleasing and receiving pleasure.

But there is no method of inspiring good humour and good sense so effectual, as that of forming a taste for polite letters and polite arts at an early age. Whatever pleases habitually, equably, and innocently, cannot fail to sweeten the temper. Books, besides that they are usually addressed to the taste, and on that account

count poſſeſs a beneficial influence on the temper, abound with maxims and with precepts of ſovereign efficacy in the improvement of the heart, the temper, and the underſtanding. Drawing and muſic, ſeriouſly and attentively purſued, are peculiarly efficacious in refining, exalting, and ſweetening the diſpoſition. Every thing, indeed, which addreſſes itſelf to the finer faculties of the human conſtitution, has, in ſome degree, this valuable effect; and ſhe, who has been early taught to value the beauties of the mind, will find its graces expanding to their higheſt perfection, at the very age in which the bloſſoms of perſonal beauty wither and decay.

If, as we grow old, we grow wiſer and better, ſurely we ſhall have no reaſon to repine, ſince our real happineſs is always proportioned to our wiſdom and our goodneſs; and we can ſcarcely avoid growing wiſer and better by age, if our minds have been early improved with learning, and duly tinctured with virtue and religion. Time and experience naturally lead to improvement; and, if our hearts are rightly diſpoſed, we ſhall find, in the conſcious improvement of our minds and morals, one of the ſweeteſt pleaſures of which our nature is capable.

However unreaſonable the exceſſive dread of approaching old age, in either ſex, it is certainly more excuſable, on many accounts, in women than in men. In men it is a mark of weakneſs, want of principle, and want of ſenſe. Yet how many do we daily ſee with wrinkled brows and bloodleſs cheeks, and tottering legs and hoary locks, decorating their walking ſkeletons with every coſmetic art, and haunting every ſcene of vice and vanity, with all the wantonneſs of a ſtripling of eighteen! There is a natural dignity, authority, and beauty, in old age honourably ſupported, which ſuch men reſign for that abſurd affectation of youth, which can only render them wretched and ridiculous.

To conſider the advanced periods of life as of no value, argues a great defect of religious principle. They conſtitute the proper ſeaſon for the pleaſures of devotion and of practical piety. They furniſh a moſt

desirable opportunity for advancing our nature to all attainable perfection, and fulfilling the purposes of our existence by benevolence and beneficence. They enable us to aspire after, and to obtain, that beauty which shall not pass away, and that youth which shall be immortal.

No. LXXIX. CURSORY CONSIDERATIONS ON ARCHITECTURE.

THE origin of building was but little posterior to the origin of mankind. Man, naked and defenceless as he came from the hand of Nature, soon found it necessary to shelter himself from the inclemency of the weather, from the attacks of wild beasts, and from the invasion of his savage neighbours. He could not lie down to sleep with security till he had formed a hut, which, however rude and inartificial, might serve the purposes of shelter and defence. If his own wants and natural ingenuity were not sufficient to instruct him how to build, he might learn from the irrational creation. The swallow's nest, and the bee's hive, suggested hints which he might adopt and improve; but this original species of building, directed by no rules, and destitute of elegance and proportion, cannot properly be said to be the work of art, or to merit the appellation of Architecture. It was, however, the embryo of those noble edifices which have since adorned all civilized countries.

To the first great works of Architecture, Ægypt, ever fertile in the productions of art as well as of nature, is recorded to have given rise. Several of them are extant at this day, and are too generally known to admit of reiterated description. They excite those ideas which arise from magnificence of design, not from delicacy of execution; and they rather astonish by their grandeur, than please by their elegance.

But the taste for works of useless bulk and unwieldy magnitude, could not long prevail. Some adequate end was required to justify labour and expence. It is natural

natural to ſuppoſe, and the event has verified the conjecture, that ſome of the earlieſt efforts of the art would be devoted to religion. The pyramids of Ægypt are indeed, with great probability, ſuppoſed by Mr. Bryant to have been temples. The magnificence of the temple was well adapted to excite ſublime ideas of the Deity; and it ſeems to have been an early received opinion, that the greateſt human ſkill and induſtry could not be more properly exerted, than to diſplay the glory of Omnipotence.

From the temples of the gods, to palaces and public edifices, deſigned for general debate, and for judicial and legiſlative tranſactions, the tranſition was eaſy and gradual. Even in the dwellings of private perſons, the art was diſplayed with minute elegance as well as magnificent ſplendour. As wealth accumulated, and the arts improved, it was natural to add to the original objects of building, which were convenience and ſafety, ſome degree of ornament. When the few wants of nature are ſatisfied, and the dangers of a ſavage ſtate removed, the reſtleſs mind of man creates artificial objects of deſire. No ſooner are the cravings of neceſſity ſilenced, than the calls of imagination gain attention. Taſte becomes importunate when the animal appetites are at reſt. At an advanced period of ſociety, it was not enough that the habitation was large, ſtrong, and durable. It was now required to be not only ſafe and commodious, but ornamental. All men of liberal and elegant minds, whoſe education, genius, and poſſeſſions, enabled them either to deſign or execute, ſoon devoted themſelves to the ſtudy of that ſymmetry, and form of beauty, which excites pleaſing ſenſations in the mind of man.

Perſons of this turn, and under circumſtances favourable to its exertion, were however, in the early ages, but thinly ſcattered on the face of the globe. A juſt taſte in Architecture was confined, at one time, to the comparatively ſmall country of ancient Greece. The greater part of mankind continued long in a ſtate of barbariſm, and conſequent inſecurity, moſt unfavourable to the progreſs of elegance and refinement: but the inhabitants of antient Greece, formed, perhaps,

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by the partial hand of nature with feelings peculiarly ſuſceptible of every kind of beauty, very early advanced the art of building to a degree of perfection, which the united intellects of all the civilized world have not ſince been able to ſurpaſs. Men have, indeed, ſometimes ventured, from motives of vanity, or caprice, to deviate from theſe models; but have commonly returned to them ſoon, with a clear conviction of having loſt ſight of excellence in the purſuit of unneceſſary innovation.

Perfection has commonly followed invention at a long interval; and the beſt productions of art have ſeldom been univerſally, and without exception, well received: but the orders of Architecture, invented by the Greeks, have never admitted real improvement by alteration, nor have they yet been beheld with diſguſt, or diſapprobation, by a ſingle individual. Fanciful changes, in the capital of a column, or in trifling embelliſhments, have, indeed, frequently been adopted; but though they might pleaſe the vanity of the artiſt, and be applauded by his partial admirers, yet have they ſeldom given ſatisfaction to the majority of ſpectators. Ignorance and dulneſs may have viewed the Grecian Architecture with an indifference eaſily accounted for; but every ſenſible mind, though unacquainted with rules, and free from favourable prepoſſeſſions, feels itſelf involuntarily ſoothed and elevated by the contemplation of it. Profuſion of ornament, and complicated vaſtneſs, have never yet been found able to cauſe that effect which is produced by *ſimple magnificence*. What is ſaid of the Grecian Architecture, is to be extended to thoſe additions which the Romans made, ſo ſimilar to the primitive productions of Greece, that I do not ſeparate them as conſtituting different ſtyles, but claſs them, for the ſake of ſimplicity, under one denomination.

Such then is the general characteriſtic of Grecian Architecture, which, though it originally diſplayed that kind of beauty which ſeems, from the univerſality of its influence, congenial to the human mind, has, at various times, been loſt by diſuſe, corrupted by vicious taſte, and mutilated by ignorance. To trace it

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in the progreſs of its revolutions, and to treat with technical accuracy of the dimenſions and particular modes of alteration, would be to invade the province of the architect and hiſtorian. It were to enter upon a detail, jejune and unintereſting. I pretend not preſumptuouſly to compoſe a didaſtic treatiſe, or an hiſtorical diſſertation on the ſubject, but merely to expreſs the feelings of an elegant, though common ſpectator.

During that period of literary darkneſs which overſpread all the nations of Europe, the antient arts, from their intimate connection with antient learning, ſeem to have been involved in the general obſcurity. Still, however, edifices for religious, for civil, for domeſtic purpoſes, were neceſſary; and the human mind, active even under diſadvantageous circumſtances, invented modes of Architecture, of which there exiſted no antient model in Greece or Rome. Of theſe, the learned antiquary is able to diſcriminate the ſpecific differences, and to point out with accuracy the Gothic, the Saracen, and other ſtyles, with all their temporary modifications. The general ſpectator, however, includes them all under the name of Gothic Architecture; and, indeed, the great reſemblance between them in many of their moſt ſtriking features, and the common notions on the ſubject, in ſome meaſure juſtify the conſidering them as of the ſame tribe, accidentally diverſified by that analogous irregularity, if we may ſo expreſs it, which is often viſible in the works of art as well as of nature.

The many venerable monuments which remain in our own country, to teſtify the magnificence of our anceſtors, enable every one to form an idea of the Gothic ſtyle from actual obſervation: and it muſt be confeſſed, that they bear evident marks of great ſkill, great labour, and great expence. Taſte, ſince the builders of theſe times made little pretenſion to what is called a pure taſte, and had few opportunities for its improvement, is not to be looked for in their works, and will, indeed, ſeldom be found. To the perfection of a building, they ſeem at one time to have thought it neceſſary to exhibit the appearance of great manual labour in little decorations, and to dazzle the eye with gilding, ſculpture, paint, and finery; a ſtyle which

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is called the *florid*, by those writers who have undertaken to discriminate with accuracy the various species of Gothic Architecture. That any part could be great from its simplicity, and beautiful from its want of ornament, our ancestors had little apprehension. They had neither the models of antiquity before their eyes, nor the treatises of those philosophers at hand, who have investigated the true causes of beauty and sublimity. No wonder, therefore, that the mason and the mechanic were suffered to display their dexterity in fanciful and capricious exertions. Difficulty of execution, and the appearance of uncommon labour, were often the only criterions of excellence with the spectator, as well as with the artist, at a time when neither of them had opportunities of cultivating a refined taste, or of forming a solid judgment, either by precept or by example.

But the modern spectator has unavoidably become familiar with the Greek model, and, without any great effort, if he is not deficient in natural taste, acquires rules of judging of the fine arts, according to truth and simplicity. On entering the Gothic abbey, or the hall, he is, indeed, struck with ideas of solemnity, and is conscious of a gloomy grandeur. The fretted roof, the long-drawn aile, the pointed arch, and the dim twilight from the narrow window, excite a species of emotions peculiarly adapted to the purposes of the cathedral. Perhaps, however, the air of antiquity, which the Gothic piles of building have by this time acquired, has, at least, an equal share in producing this effect on the observer. When he views the abbey merely as a work of Architecture, without admitting religious or historical associations, and without indulging the prejudices of the antiquary, perhaps he no longer feels himself affected with surprise, or particularly disposed to devotion. When he looks up without prejudice, he owns, that however extensive the area, and vast the structure, his attention is drawn off from contemplating the grandeur of the whole, by a *profusion of little ornaments*, whose angles offend the eye, and which destroy the unity of the object. A great multiplicity of ideas cannot severally make a due impression,

impreſſion, and produce a proper effect, when they operate in conjunction. While we ſurvey the complicated parts, we neglect the whole; and while we attend to the whole, by abſtracting the parts, which is neither an eaſy nor an agreeable effort, thoſe laviſh ornaments, of which the complicated parts conſiſt, become indifferent or diſguſting, becauſe uſeleſs, ſuperfluous, and cumberſome. Inſtead of cauſing agreeable ſenſations, which ought to be a ſubordinate object in every building for public uſe, ſuch edifices are found to raiſe ideas, in ſome degree painful, from the diſtraction of mind which they occaſion. Meanneſs is often the reſult where ſublimity was expected, and littleneſs appears even in the midſt of grandeur.

Gothic Architecture is often found diſguſting at preſent, from a diſproportion or inconſiſtency, which, perhaps, originally pleaſed. A long and ſlender pillar ſometimes apparently ſupports a weight, which ſeems too great for it to bear. This want of ſymmetry renders an object highly deformed, which probably, by the appearance of extraordinary ſkill, delighted our anceſtors. The pointed arch, which, becauſe we have always ſeen it uſed in buildings venerable for age and ſanctity, we have learned to think peculiarly ſolemn, is certainly in itſelf unpleaſing and improper. The aukward angle, in the vertex, ſtops the rapid courſe of the eye, which loves to purſue the line of a circle, or ſemicircle, without obſtruction. Nor let the ſatisfaction, which is ſometimes experienced from a view of it, be thought an unanſwerable objection to the general juſtneſs of this remark: for pleaſing ideas aſſociated with objects unpleaſing, will often communicate their agreeable tinge by approximation, and render even deformity no longer ungraceful. A view of the Gothic arch, in the antique pile raiſed by our progenitors, calls to remembrance the generations that have preceded us; renews the idea of ſome hiſtorical fact or celebrated perſonage, or ſuggeſts reflections on the piety, the zeal, the comparative ingenuity of our forefathers; and, on the whole, raiſes thoughts pleaſingly awful on the ſanctity of the *time-honoured* edifice. All or any of theſe arbitrary aſſociations, will give an

agreeable air to an object, which might otherwiſe be contemplated with indifference or diſguſt.

The painted window, a ſtriking ornament of our antient edifices, exhibits a ſpecimen, by which we may form a judgment of the general turn of that taſte which dictated every other decoration. Glaring colours, rendered ſtill more glaring by tranſparency, ſeem to have conſtituted, in the idea of thoſe who lived a century or two ago, the perfection of beauty. Accordingly, they viewed with a pleaſure, uncontrolled by the chaſte notions of modern elegance, the gaudy ſhrine, the glittering altar, the painted monument, and the emblazoned cieling. Exactneſs of repreſentation, and a faithful adherence to nature and propriety, were indeed wanting; but their place was amply ſupplied, in the ideas of the dark ages, by the glare of dazzling ſplendour. Perhaps, it may be juſtly queſtioned, whether the genuine graces of unadorned nature were at all pleaſing to eyes accuſtomed to admire all that was laborious and artificial. The Medicean Venus would probably have had few charms till dreſſed like the lady of Loretto. The meretricious ſtaining of the glaſs, was commonly preferred to the chaſte colouring of the canvas. Such, indeed, is the general preference where refinement is unknown; and there is no doubt, but that an Indian would ſet a higher value on the Dutch toy that glitters, and awkwardly imitates the human ſhape, than on the ſtatue of a Phidias, or on the painting of an Apelles. No wonder that our anceſtors, at a period when they neither ſtudied nature nor the antients, diſplayed in their works of art the characteriſtic groſſneſs of barbariſm. Finery ſtrikes immediately on the perceptive faculties, and a very conſiderable degree of civilization muſt have taken place, before the firſt ſtrong deciſion of the ſenſes can be ſuperſeded by the dictates of a critical delicacy.

The parts of a building, which add to its ſtrength, ought, whenever it is practicable, to contribute to its beauty. The vaſt buttreſſes of the Gothic Architecture, ſuppoſing that they were neceſſary to ſupport, which however they were not always, are ſeldom thought at preſent to conduce to ornament: but that they were often

often intended to adorn, we may conclude from their being applied where, as ſupports, they are ſuperfluous. And indeed, conſidered in this light, they are perfectly conſiſtent with that general taſte, which ſeems to have delighted in ſupernumerary appendages, provided they conveyed the idea of great labour or difficulty. In the caſtle, and the fortified wall, they are, indeed, always admitted with good effect, becauſe they add to the appearance of ſecurity as well as to real ſtrength; but in edifices, conſecrated to religion and the arts of peace, they occaſion that diſguſt to true taſte, which reſults from the miſapplication of ſupports and embelliſhments. Nor are they of themſelves in the leaſt beautiful. They want the rotundity of the column, and the uprightneſs of the pilaſter, and abound with unpleaſing angles.

The internal ſupports are often no leſs heavy and inelegant. Even where there appears a great reſemblance to Grecian Architecture, we find no veſtiges of Grecian grace. The pillars are prepoſterouſly thick, and want the due height to render them pleaſing to the eye. The baſes, the ſhafts, and the capitals, are joined together without ſymmetry, and ſeem not to have been conſidered by the artiſts as forming one whole, which when proportionate, conſtitutes an object that never yet failed to pleaſe. Moſt of the artiſts, it is probable, knew not, in an unenlightened age, the difference between the Orders; and by blending them capriciouſly together, or by omitting ſome of their eſſential parts, formed indeed a column, not quite unlike the Grecian, but too much diſguiſed and deformed to be recognized among the orders of antiquity. The ornaments of the capitals are whimſical and ugly. The architrave, the frieze, and the cornice, are preſerved in a mutilated, fantaſtic, and irregular form. Under theſe diſadvantages, what little there is of the Grecian Architecture yields in beauty to the Gothic, when the Gothic appears in its beſt ſtyle, genuine and unmixed. The mixture of the two ſtyles in the ſame building, which is not uncommon, never has a good effect; ſince the Gothic ſpoils the uniformity of the Grecian, and the Grecian renders the

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Gothic more conſpicuouſly inelegant by the contraſt of its own beauty.

The darkneſs, remarkable in religious buildings of this ſtyle, has been admired as an excellence. It is ſaid to throw the mind into that ſerious temper, which is peculiarly adapted to the indulgence of devotion. Such an effect it may perhaps produce, in a great degree, on minds ſubject to ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm, or ſtrongly influenced by a warm imagination; yet, why light, one of the moſt glorious works of the creation, ſhould refrigerate the ardour of religion in the rational and diſpaſſionate profeſſor of it, no good reaſon can be aſſigned. The imaginations of all men are, however, affected by very trivial cauſes; and he knows little of human nature, who knows not the power of the imagination over the ſtrongeſt underſtanding: but it is the buſineſs of philoſophy to aſſert the empire of reaſon over fancy. A religious dimneſs may, perhaps, be deemed neceſſary by the bigotted inhabitants of the convent and the cloiſter, whoſe minds, it is to be feared, are often as dark as their habitations: but light is cheerful, and cheerfulneſs is the diſpoſition of innocence. If guilt is to be taught to feel contrition by the gloominess of the temple, it is to be preſumed, that the pious ſorrow will be as tranſient as the emotion which cauſed it, and which, like other productions of the fancy, muſt be of ſhort continuance. That our predeceſſors had no ſuch end in view we may conclude, becauſe the ſmall contracted window is not appropriated to the church, but as often obſerved in the Gothic hall, palace, and private dwelling. We may fairly infer, that the faſhion took its riſe from a defect in taſte and judgment, not from a conviction of its peculiar propriety in religious houſes; or, perhaps, the aperture was made ſmall, becauſe glaſs was ſcarce in the early ages, and a large opening admitted the inclemency of the weather; but, whatever was the cauſe, one is almoſt tempted to ſay, that it was a proof of uncommon narrowneſs of mind, to be ſparing of that light which the Author of nature has beſtowed with a liberality almoſt as unbounded as his power.

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But, in truth, while we cenſure the contracted taſte, we muſt applaud the enlarged benevolence and unaffected piety of our forefathers. The numerous buildings which they conſecrated to learning, however uncouth their appearance, have afforded retreats and opportunities of improvement to men, who have been at once the ornaments of our nation, and of mankind. Nor were the alms-houſe, and the hoſpital, leſs capable of adminiſtering comfort and relief to the needy and infirm, becauſe built with little grace or ſymmetry: and the pious heart has poured forth its animated devotion at the rude Gothic ſhrine, with a fervour not to be ſurpaſſed in the Grecian temple. The taſte of our anceſtors is, indeed, no longer a pattern for our own: but their beneficent virtues will for ever continue proper objects of imitation.

The revival of antient literature, was ſoon followed by the revival of true taſte. The latter was a natural conſequence of the former. By an acquaintance with books, the mind was opened, the views enlarged, and curioſity excited. Travelling into foreign countries for the purpoſes of improvement, as well as of war and commerce, became a general practice, and was facilitated by the liberal ſpirit of enquiry, which began univerſally to prevail. Our artiſts no ſooner ſaw the Grecian and Roman remains of Architecture, than they caught the idea of beauty, which they realized at their return. The new ſtyle of building, as the antient, at its revival after lying dormant many ages, might be called, was immediately compared with that which then prevailed, and was preferred to it with intuitive diſcernment. It wanted only to be ſeen, to be admired and adopted.

And, indeed, its beauties are of ſo peculiar a kind, as to ſtrike and pleaſe even the uncultivated mind. Like the fabric of the univerſe, it derives much of its grandeur from its ſimplicity. Its ornaments are chaſte, elegant, captivating, and never ſuperfluous. They are purpoſely contrived to wear the appearance of utility, and often really contribute to ſupport as well as to adorn. Many of the moſt eſſential parts are, from

from their ſhape and proportion, as beautiful as thoſe ſpecifically termed ornamental. The column of each order, with all its appendages, and the ſemi-circular, or elliptical arch, without a pointed vertex, ſeem to have ſomething inherent in the form of them capable of giving pleaſure to the mind, previouſly to the direction of rules, and the diſquiſitions of criticiſm.

The paſſion for novelty and ſingularity is, however, often found to prefer the new and uncommon, even to allowed and eſtabliſhed excellence: and, for the gratification of this inborn avidity of human nature, abſurdities, long exploded and relinquiſhed, are often revived, and fanciful and monſtrous innovations introduced. It is not therefore ſurpriſing, however culpable, that, in oppoſition to the general taſte of mankind, many ſtill admire and labour to reſtore the Gothic Architecture; or that, tired of Grecian beauty, they endeavour to import, into northern climates, a ſtyle which they call oriental, but which is often mixed and modified with their own groteſque or puerile inventions. Ingenuity of deſign, ſkill in execution, and rarity of appearance, may cauſe even buildings of this fantaſtic form to excite a tranſient pleaſure among the curious, or the uninformed; but it is to be hoped, that the general depravity of taſte, which can render them objects of general approbation, will not ſoon take place. What were this, but a preference of darkneſs to light, of deformity to beauty, of barbariſm to refinement?

Of a revolution ſo fatal to the fine arts, there is indeed little danger. The ſtandard of taſte, that great deſideratum in many of the works of human ingenuity, ſeems to be diſcovered and eſtabliſhed in Architecture. The caprice of a few individuals cannot alter it. Nor is it likely to be loſt, till the ſame darkneſs, which once overſpread antient Greece and Rome, ſhall involve all modern Europe; an event too improbable to be apprehended, but by the viſionary.

To pleaſe the eye has, in later times, become a collateral object in the building deſigned for private habitation, as it ever was in erecting the palace, the ſenate-

ſenate-houſe, and the temple: and though the modern methods of multiplying the works of original artiſts by ſubſtituting ſtucco for ſtone, by caſting in moulds the ornaments which were wont to be wrought by the chiſel, and by uſing gilding for real gold, have rendered the Grecian ſtyle, and a ſtyle of ſplendour, common in buildings intended for mean purpoſes; yet, however miſplaced and proſtituted, the Grecian ſtyle ſtill retains intrinſic beauty, and ought not to be the leſs eſteemed, when it is diſplayed in its proper place by the ingenious architect.

With many ſuch, and their judicious admirers, this nation is and has been honoured. It were eaſy to name thoſe who would adorn the ſchools of Greece, and of antient and modern Italy; but it is totally unneceſſary. Their quick-ſighted fellow-citizens have marked their merit; and their own works will be a monument of their fame to late poſterity.

By the efforts of theſe artiſts, conducted according to the moſt graceful taſte, the face of our country is daily acquiring new beauty. Grace without uſe and ſolidity is, indeed, of little permanent value; but, when united with theſe, it commands, by deſerving, univerſal applauſe and eſteem. While, in the preſent age, we behold numerous and beautiful edifices ariſing on all ſides, devoted to the purpoſes of religion, of benevolence, of learning, and of liberal enjoyment, we may juſtly congratulate our own nation, that the happy art is diſcovered and practiſed of combining elegance with convenience, and rendering ornament conducive to accommodation, and accommodation to ornament.

No. LXXX. A SHORT SYSTEM OF VIRTUE AND HAPPINESS.

I WILL ſuppoſe a virtuous young man forming in his mind the principles of his future conduct, and uttering the reſult of his reflections, in the following ſoliloquy:

" At the age when I arrive at maturity of reaſon, " I perceive myſelf placed in a world abounding with " external objects; I perceive within me powers and " paſſions formed to be excited and affected with the " objects which every where ſurround me. I am na- " turally tempted to interrogate myſelf, what am I? " whence came I? and whither am I going?

" With a view to ſatisfy my own enquiries, I con- " ſider others who appear to be juſt like myſelf; I " liſten to the inſtruction of thoſe who have obtained " a reputation for wiſdom; and I examine with ſerious " attention the volumes in which are written the words " of the wiſe.

" The reſult of the whole enquiry is a ſincere con- " viction, that I am placed here to perform many du- " ties, that I originate from a ſupreme Creator, and " that I am going on in the journey of life, to ac- " compliſh ſome of his gracious purpoſes at the cloſe " of it.

" I divide my duty into three parts, according to " the ſuggeſtions of my own reaſon, and the inſtruc- " tion of books. They conſiſt of the obligations " which I owe to myſelf, to others, and to Him, in " whoſe hands are both they and I, the great Lord of " the univerſe.

" With reſpect to myſelf, as I conſiſt of two parts, " a body and a mind, my duty to myſelf again ſepa- " rates itſelf into two correſpondent ſubdiviſions. " My body is a machine curiouſly organized, and " eaſily deranged by exceſs and irregularity. When

" diſturbed

" disturbed in its œconomy, it subjects me to pain, " and disables me from all necessary and pleasant ex- " ertion. I owe it therefore to myself, to taste the " cup, and partake the banquet, and gratify my senses, " no further than those limits which are obviously " prescribed by reason and experience. I further " learn, from the religion of my country, that my " body is the temple of the holy spirit. To pollute " it with presumptuous transgression cannot but be " blasphemy; to devote myself to gluttony, drunken- " ness, and debauchery, is at once to deaden the " growing energies of spiritual life, and to weaken " and destroy the subordinate yet necessary parts of " me, my animal and material fabric; it is to shorten " life, and to disable me from performing its duties " while it lasts.

" But I have a mind also capable of rising to high " improvements by culture, and of sinking to a brutal " stupidity by neglect. I will make use of all the " advantages of education. I will devote my hours of " leisure to reading and reflection. Elegant letters, " as well as useful science, shall claim my attention; " for all that tends to polish the mind, tends also to " sweeten the temper, and to mitigate the remains of " natural ferocity.

" My mind, as well as my body, is greatly con- " cerned in avoiding intemperance. Eating to excess " clouds its brightness, blunts its edge, and, as it " were, drags it down to all the grossness of mate- " riality. Intemperate drinking not only reduces it " at the time of its immediate influence to a state of " brutality, but gradually destroys all its vigour. " The sensual indulgencies in general, when inordi- " nate and excessive, debase, corrupt and brutalize. " Their delights are transient, and their pains severe " and of long duration.

" Instead then of running into the danger of tempta- " tion during the ardour of my youth, I will fly from the " conflict, in which my own passions are sure to fight a- " gainst, and will probably betray me to the enemy. I see, " indeed. thousands pursuing pleasure, and professing

" to

" to have found it in perfection in the haunts of de-
" bauchery. But I see them but for a little while.
" Like the silly insect that flutters with delight around
" the taper, they soon receive some fatal injury in
" their minds, their persons, or their fortunes, and
" drop in irrecoverable ruin. Alas! I am too much
" inclined to vice, from the depravity of my nature,
" and the violence of my passions. I will not add
" fuel to the fire, nor increase the violence of that
" natural tempest within me, which of itself is sufficient
" for my destruction.

" But, at the same time, I will not be a cynic.
" The world abounds with innocent enjoyments. The
" kind God of nature intended that I should taste
" them. But moderation is essential to true pleasure.
" My own experience, and the experience of man-
" kind from their origin, has declared, that whenever
" pleasure exceeds the bounds of moderation, it is not
" only highly injurious, but disgustful. In order to
" enjoy pleasure, I see the necessity of pursuing some
" business with attention. The vicissitude is necessary
" to excite an appetite and give a relish. Nay, the
" very performance of business with skill and success
" is attended with a delightful satisfaction, which
" few boasted pleasures are able to confer.

" While I take care of myself, of my health, of
" my improvement in morals and understanding, I
" will not harbour pride, or look down with super-
" ciliousness or ill-nature on those who live, as it
" were at random, and who acknowledge no other
" guide of their conduct, but the sudden impulse of
" a temporary inclination. With all my improve-
" ments and endeavours, I shall still feel imperfec-
" tions enough to humble me. Candour and humility
" are some of the least fallible marks of sound sense
" and sincere virtue. I shall have sufficient employ-
" ment in correcting myself; nor shall I presume to
" censure others, unless my profession or relative situ-
" ation renders it my duty.

" My duty to myself is, indeed, intimately con-
" nected with my duty to others. By preserving the

" faculties

" faculties of my mind and body, and by improving
" them to the utmoſt, I am enabled to exert them with
" effect in the ſervice of ſociety.

" I am connected with others by the ties of con-
" ſanguinity and friendſhip, and by the common bond
" of partaking in the ſame humanity. As a ſon, I
" ſhall be tender and dutiful; as a brother, uniformly
" affectionate; as a huſband, faithful and friendly;
" as a father, kind and provident; as a man, benevo-
" lent to men in whatever circumſtances, and however
" ſeparated from me by country, religion, or govern-
" ment.

" But univerſal benevolence muſt not be an inac-
" tive principle. If it proceed not to real bene-
" ficence, I fear it will have more in it of oſtentation
" than of ſincerity. I will then prove its ſincerity by
" doing good, and removing evil of every kind as far
" as my abilities allow me, and my influence ex-
" tends.

" But before I pretend to generoſity, I will be
" ſtrictly juſt. Truth ſhall regulate my words, and
" equity my actions. If I am engaged in a profeſ-
" ſion, I will do the duties of it; if in merchandize,
" I will take no advantage of the ignorant, nor debaſe
" my character, nor wound my conſcience, for the
" ſake of lucre. In all my intercourſe with ſociety,
" I will recollect that heavenly precept of doing to
" others as I wiſh they ſhould do to me, and will en-
" deavour to obey it. I may, I certainly ſhall offend
" from the violence of my paſſions, the weakneſs of
" my judgment, the perverſeneſs of my will, and
" from miſtake and miſapprehenſion. But while I
" keep the evangelical rule in view, and ſincerely la-
" bour to conform to it, I ſhall ſeldom commit ſuch
" offences againſt others, as will be either permanently
" or deeply injurious.

" With reſpect to my duty to my Creator, I derive
" an argument in favour of religion, from the feel-
" ings of my own boſom, ſuperior to the moſt elabo-
" rate ſubtilties of human ingenuity. In the hour of
" diſtreſs, my heart as naturally flies for ſuccour to

" the

" the Deity, as when hungry and thirſty I ſeek food " and water; or when weary, repoſe. In religion I " look for comfort, and in religion I always find it. " Devotion ſupplies me with a pure and exalted plea- " ſure. It elevates my ſoul, and teaches me to look " down with a proper contempt upon many objects " which are eagerly ſought, but which end in miſery. " In this reſpect, and in many others, it effects, in " the beſt and moſt compendious method, what has " been in vain pretended to by proud philoſophy.

" And in ſelecting a mode or peculiar ſyſtem of re- " ligion, I ſhall conſider what that was, in which my " father lived and died. I find it to have been the " religion of Chriſt. I examine it with reverence. I " encounter many difficulties; but at the ſame time, " I feel within me an internal evidence, which, uniting " its force with the external, forbids me to diſbe- " lieve. When involuntary doubts ariſe, I immediate- " ly ſilence their importunity by recollecting the weak- " neſs of my judgment, and the vain preſumption of " haſtily deciding on the moſt important of all *ſub-* " jects, againſt ſuch powerful evidence, and againſt " the major part of the civilized world.

" I will learn humility of the humble Jeſus, and " gratefully accept the beneficial doctrines and glori- " ous offers, which his benign religion reaches out *to* " all, who ſincerely ſeek them by prayer and peni- " tence.

" In vain ſhall the conceited philoſophers, whom " faſhion and ignorance admire, attempt to weaken " my belief, or undermine the principles of my mo- " rality. Without their aid, I can be ſufficiently " wicked, and ſufficiently miſerable. Human life " abounds with evil. I will ſeek balſams for the " wounds of the heart in the ſweets of innocence, and " in the conſolations of religion. Virtue, I am con- " vinced, is the nobleſt ornament of humanity, and the " ſource of the ſublimeſt and the ſweeteſt pleaſure; " and piety leads to that peace, which the world, and " all that it inherits, cannot beſtow. Let others enjoy " the pride and pleaſure of being called philoſophers,

" deiſts,

" deiſts, ſceptics; be mine the real, unoſtentatious " qualities of the honeſt, humble, and charitable Chriſt- " ian. When the gaudy glories of faſhion and of vain " philoſophy ſhall have withered like a ſhort-lived " flower, ſincere piety and moral honeſty ſhall flouriſh " as the cedar of Lebanus.

" But I repreſs my triumphs. After all my im- " provements, and, all my pantings for perfection, I " ſhall ſtill be greatly defective. Let me then (to " whatever degree of excellence I advance), let me " never forget to ſhew to others that indulgence, " which my infirmities, errors, and voluntary miſ- " conduct, will require both from them and from mine " and their Almighty Parent."

No. LXXXI. ON THE PECULIAR PROPRIETY OF EXCITING PERSONAL MERIT AND MANLY VIRTUE, IN A TIME OF PUBLIC DISTRESS AND DIFFICULTY.

THE dignity and rational happineſs of human nature are always proportionate to its real improvements. Moral inſtruction can never be ſuperfluous or unſeaſonable; for human virtue, like the ſtone of Syſiphus, has a continual tendency to roll down the hill, and requires to be forced up again by the never-ceaſing efforts of ſucceeding moraliſts.

But with reſpect to the influence of virtue on the proſperity of a ſtate, it is certain, that emergencies ariſe when extraordinary degrees of it, throughout the whole body of the people, are peculiarly neceſſary. National adverſity, like adverſity in private life, prohibits the indulgence of a ſupine indolence, and calls for the moſt energetic activity. Virtues which have lain dormant, like arms in the arſenal, during the ſoft ſeaſon of peace and plenty, muſt be brought forth to be, as it were, brightened and ſharpened in the day of diſtreſs.

diſtreſs. And perhaps no time may demand them more loudly than when a nation is at once engaged in war with four different and formidable powers, and divided at home by violent diſſentions.

The ſtrength of empire conſiſts in the ſpirit of its members, and not altogether in its poſſeſſions and pecuniary reſources. But how is that ſpirit to be rouſed or properly directed? The underſtanding muſt be enlightened, the ideas elevated, the heart enlarged. Ignorance, avarice, and luxury, render men indifferent under what form of government, or in what ſtate of ſociety they live. They bring on a weakneſs and a meaneſs, which, for the ſake of gratification or intereſt, rejoices to ſubmit to the ſceptre of Deſpotiſm.

Liberty, without which we might almoſt venture to be impious, and repine at our exiſtence as an uſeleſs and a baneful gift of God, cannot be underſtood or valued, and conſequently will not be duly ſupported, without a competent ſhare of improvement moral and intellectual. The vain, the vicious, and the mercenary, ſeldom extend their cares beyond themſelves; and the ignorant plebeian, though he may vociferate the word Liberty in a riot, knows not how to give it an effectual ſupport. Alas! what avails empty breath when oppoſed to a bayonet or a bullet? Nothing but a ſteady, firm, ſyſtematic, and unſhaken oppoſition to the encroachments of thoſe, to whom fortune has given power, and nature an inclination, to abuſe it, can ſecure thoſe bleſſings to our children, for which a Hampden and a Sydney bled. The glorious liberties of an Engliſhman, ſuch as the right of trial by juries, a participation of the legiſlature, the freedom of the preſs, and the privilege of ſpeaking, acting and thinking, without arbitrary controul, are ſuch as render England, in compariſon with ſome neighbouring nations, a terreſtrial paradiſe; but yet they are advantages too remote to affect the ſenſual and ſelf-intereſted, and too complicated to be completely underſtood, or rationally valued, by a groſs and uncultivated underſtanding.

I venture

I venture then to assert, that the writer, who effectually recommends pure morals, manly virtues, and the culture of the intellectual powers, by a liberal and virtuous education, not only serves the cause of learning, morality, and religion, but effects political good, of a species the most permanent and substantial. His labours tend to advance the members of his society to all the perfection of which humanity is susceptible. He enlightens their understandings, that they may see the great and solid objects of public good; and he emboldens their hearts to pursue it like men—like men, not such as grovel on the earth in modern Greece and modern Italy, in Asia, Africa, and South America, but such as opposed a Xerxes in the straits of Thermopylæ, waged war with a Philip, or put an end to the ambition of a Tarquin and a Cæsar.

The noble love of liberty, which warmed the bosoms of these men, was not the mean offspring of envy and malice, nor of a proud and peevish opposition to the ruling powers, whatever they might be; but it was acquired in the schools of rigid discipline and sublime philosophy. It was accompanied with singular gravity of manners, and dignity of sentiment. Now let us suppose a nation, in which those, who have most influence in its government, are become, through a general and fashionable depravity, gamesters, debauchees, addicted to sordid interest, to luxury, to vanity, to incurring debt without a prospect or an intention to repay: can any thing like the virtue of Leonidas or Brutus subsist in such men? Will they, in an extremity, be ready to sacrifice for the public their estates, their places, their pensions, their expectations, which furnish them with their chief good, selfish gratifications? Will they not rather rejoice to be dependent on a court, which is able to gratify their vanity, supply their pleasures, and reward their meanest submission? Such men, were so improbable an event to take place as the conquest of England by France, would be the first to crouch to the Grand Monarque, and would even rejoice to convert the land of liberty into the land of effeminate pleasure and apish graces.

From